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From NOSB to NOP to YOU!
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FROM NOSB TO NOP TO YOU!

THE RULEMAKING PROCESS

BEYOND THE SUNSET

The fall 2015 NOSB meeting marks the final stage of the 2017 Sunset Review. The National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) and organic stakeholders have spent countless hours reviewing and making determinations on the continued listing of 198 National List inputs. When we leave this meeting, the National Organic Program (NOP) will begin its rulemaking process to codify the inputs that will remain as allowed in organic production and handling for another five years. In 2020, we will begin the review and rulemaking process again.

The five-year Sunset Review process is a critical piece to the organic regulations. It drives the organic sector to maintain an organic “toolbox” that is stocked with the best and least toxic technology our food system has developed. At the same time, it consumes a significant amount of our time and resources, and leaves less time for all of the other critical work needed to keep the non-material related organic practice standards current and consistent with consumer expectations.

STATUS OF NOSB RECOMMENDATIONS ON ORGANIC PRACTICE STANDARDS

NOSB is a voluntary advisory committee with a huge workload expectation. At least that’s what the numbers reveal if we take a look at the number of recommendations posted on the NOSB website. There are 322 non-sunset recommendations that have been posted since 2001. If we include the sunset proposals, we bring in over 600 additional recommendations.

If one starts to do the math and considers the investment into developing and processing over 900 recommendations, it doesn’t take long to accumulate thousands of hours in work, dollars in expenses and ground/air miles in travel required by everyone involved in the process. The good news is that our process is unique. It’s exactly this kind of public process and scrutiny that makes organic standards the most consumer-driven and most heavily regulated food system in the world. That said, it is time to take a careful look at the amount of work actually being completed when it comes to recommendations related to our practice standards.

Given NOSB’s primary focus over National List materials and the set deadlines built into the Sunset process, we can say that the large majority of the final NOSB material-related recommendations that were accepted by NOP have completed the rulemaking process (pending Sunset 2017 of course). What can we say about the NOSB recommendations for new organic practice standards or ones that revise or clarify existing standards? Let’s take a look.

Since 2001, NOSB has passed 44 final recommendations on non-material related issues. Of that 44, 27 were intended for guidance and 17 for rulemaking. Examples of guidance include retail certification, commercial availability criteria and inspector qualifications. Examples of rulemaking include apiculture, pet food, animal welfare and aquaculture. Of the 44 recommendations passed by NOSB and accepted by NOP, 22 have left NOP’s office in draft form to complete the rulemaking process. Of those 22, USDA has finalized 14 (9 guidance documents, 3 instruction documents, 1 policy and 1 rule). Three of the of the 22 were recently released as proposals for public comment, and we are waiting on the release of the final.
THE NOP RULEMAKING PROCESS – WHAT TAKES SO LONG?

Anyone who has watched the NOP rulemaking process knows that it doesn't happen overnight, and that it doesn't happen in a vacuum. Changes made to the organic regulations are classified as a “legislative rule change.” This type of rule, operating under the requirements of the Administrative Procedures Act (APA), is seldom a simple process.

In a nutshell, the rulemaking process involves drafting a proposed rule and posting it to the Federal Register so the public can consider it and provide feedback. The open comment period is typically 60 to 90 days. Comments are then considered (for an unspecified amount of time), and ultimately a final rule is approved and published.
The aspect not detailed here is the extensive process that every agency, including NOP, must go through to initiate the rulemaking process and get approval to move ahead. Additionally, once approval is received and the rule is drafted, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) conducts its own extensive analysis to determine the costs and benefits of the proposed rule. If a rule is considered “significant” (annual effect of $100 million or more), additional interagency review and justification are required. Examples of rules that were designated “significant” include the Pasture Rule, Origin of Livestock, Pet Food, and Aquaculture.

It literally can take years to move from initiating a proposed rule to publishing the final regulation. And, when we consider the organic regulations, the process usually begins with an NOSB discussion document or recommendation which often adds multiple notice and comment cycles onto the already lengthy process that occurs at USDA.

The Origin of Livestock rule is a perfect example of where the NOSB process took nearly five years, and THEN it took another nine years until the proposed rule was released. The final rule is pending with no indication of the date that it will be released.

### Origin of Livestock Rulemaking Timeline

**ORIGIN OF LIVESTOCK**

This USDA rule will allow producers to transition dairy animals into organic production once. After the one-time transition, any new dairy animals must be managed organically from the last third of gestation or sourced from animals that already completed their transition to organic.

**PLANNING OUR WORK AND WORKING OUR PLAN**

As the dust settles and the organic sector changes its focus from the 2017 Sunset horizon onto the next set of NOSB recommendations, it is an opportune moment for us to step back and ask ourselves how we want to best utilize our time.

- What do we want NOSB to work on, and what do we want NOP to prioritize?
- How can organic stakeholders, including NOSB, best facilitate and influence the more timely flow of an NOSB recommendation through the rulemaking process?
NOP has done an admirable job of moving hundreds of NOSB recommendations on materials through the process. But, in total sum, 30 of the 44 practice standard recommendations to-date have yet to be completed. Only 1 practice standard rule has been released in 14 years.

The efforts and accomplishments of NOP and NOSB are unquestionably impressive and commendable, but the numbers speak to a challenge that requires a more deliberate and steadfast focus—and with participation from the beginning to the end.

### Timespan for USDA-NOP* Rulemaking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organic Practice Standards</th>
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<tr>
<td>PASTURE</td>
<td>5 years (complete)</td>
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<tr>
<td>APICULTURE</td>
<td>5 years and counting</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANIMAL WELFARE</td>
<td>6 years and counting</td>
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<tr>
<td>PET FOOD</td>
<td>7 years and counting</td>
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<tr>
<td>AQUACULTURE</td>
<td>7 years and counting</td>
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<tr>
<td>ORIGIN OF LIVESTOCK</td>
<td>13 years and counting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUSHROOMS</td>
<td>14 years and counting</td>
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NOSB and NOP have limited capacity. Being actively involved in the NOSB process is only a start. It’s convenient to direct our time and attention to NOSB twice a year, ask a voluntary board to do far more than it or NOP has the capacity to take on, and then return to our jobs and complain about how nothing gets done. If we are interested in making a difference, we have to show up early in the process, carefully choose our battles, create a realistic work plan, and stay on it until the work is done.

We need to plan our work, and then work our plan. We can help facilitate movement of the NOSB recommendations by communicating our priorities to NOP. Organic stakeholders, including NOSB, must stay engaged in the USDA rulemaking process and weigh in on why it’s important for USDA to complete the job. A famous filmmaker once said that 80 percent of success is showing up. In the regulatory arena, we know that it’s not just showing up that yields success, but staying at the table until the job is done.
Every household needs a good toolbox and a well-stocked first aid kit to deal with unexpected challenges that can’t be handled in the usual way. And so it is with organic agriculture.

Many consumers believe that absolutely no synthetic substances are used in organic production. For the most part, they are correct and this is the basic tenet of the organic law. But there are a few limited exceptions to this rule, and the National List is designed to handle these exceptions. The National List can be thought of as the “restricted tool box” for organic farmers and handlers. Like the toolboxes or first aid kits in our cupboards to deal with critical situations when all else fails, the organic toolbox is to be used only under very special circumstances.

The organic farmer’s toolbox contains materials that have been traditionally used in organic production. By law, they are necessary tools that are widely recognized as safe and for which there are no natural alternatives. This toolbox is much smaller than the “full-toolbox” used in conventional farming.

**Organic farmers have restricted access to 25 synthetic active pest control products while over 900 are registered for use in conventional farming.**

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**How do the synthetic pest control products allowed in organic farming compare to the pesticides allowed in conventional farming?**

- **25 synthetic active pest control products** allowed in organic crop production
- **900+ synthetic active pesticide products** registered for use in conventional farming by EPA*

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* Organic Trade Association | www.OTA.com
Organic ranchers have restricted access to 22 synthetic livestock health treatments, while over 550 synthetic active ingredients are approved in conventional animal drug products.

How do the synthetic livestock health treatments allowed in organic livestock production compare to the drugs allowed in conventional livestock production?

The organic farmer must first use preventive practices and biologics to prevent sickness and move onto the toolbox only when and if they don’t work. In this way the toolbox is “restricted.”

- **22** synthetic livestock health treatments allowed in organic livestock production
- **550+** synthetic active ingredients approved by FDA* in animal drug products

Before organic farmers can use any of these substances, however, they must develop a pest and disease management plan that describes how they will first prevent and manage pests without the use of National List inputs.

The restricted toolbox can only be opened when mechanical, cultural, and biological controls are insufficient to control pests, weeds and disease. This is foundational to organic farming.

The National List is also designed to cover the up to 5% non-organic minor ingredients allowed in organic food processing. These ingredients are essential in organic food processing but difficult or impossible to obtain in organic form, either because the supply is very limited or the ingredient is a non-agricultural, like baking soda, and cannot be certified organic. A total of 79 non-agricultural minor ingredients are allowed in an organic processor’s “pantry,” while the conventional food processor’s pantry is bulging with more than 3,000 total allowed substances.

*FDA Approved Animal Drug Products (Green Book)
How do the materials allowed in organic processed foods compare to the materials allowed in all other food?

79 non-agricultural minor ingredients allowed in organic processing

3000+ substances comprise Everything Added to Food in the United States (EAFUS)

Compared to the 79 non-agricultural minor ingredients allowed in organic processing, more than 3,000 total substances comprise an inventory often referred to as Everything Added to Food in the United States (EAFUS), and this is only a partial list of all food ingredients that may be lawfully added to conventional food.

The restricted toolbox used in organic production and handling represents the best and least-toxic technology our food system has developed.

NOSB regularly reviews the tools in the organic toolbox to assure they still meet the organic criteria set forth in the law. Under the rigorous Sunset process, NOSB and organic stakeholders review the contents of the toolbox every five years to make sure that organic’s allowed tools continue to be safe for humans, safe for the environment, and necessary because of the lack of natural or organic alternatives. There is no other regulation like this in the world.

Now more than ever, organic agricultural practices are needed on more acres to address significant environmental challenges for our planet. Now more than ever, the supply of organic ingredients, particularly grains and animal feed, is falling behind consumer demand. We face the dual challenges of encouraging more farmers to convert to organic and making our food production more sustainable. NOSB’s challenge is to protect the integrity of organic, while at the same time providing producers and handlers with enough flexibility to allow them to comply with organic standards and to also expand organic acreage.

Like the toolboxes and first aid kits of households that are prepared for unexpected emergencies should they arise, the organic toolbox provides the tools to safely meet the challenges of today’s organic world.
It was 1997 and the National Organic Program (NOP) as we now know it was still evolving. On December 16 of that year, the first proposed rules to establish national organic standards were published by the NOP, erupting a roar of public discourse. The Department of Agriculture, which had just begun overseeing the National Organic Program, was swamped with over 275,000 public comments on the proposal, and the public interest in organic has only intensified since.

Today’s strict and comprehensive network of federal requirements and regulations that monitor and check the organic industry, from the farm gate to the dinner plate, was born out of a public outcry that started rumbling in the 1970s for a healthier and safer agricultural system that would not endanger the environment or pose risks to human health. That public sentiment culminated in the Organic Foods Production Act in the 1990 Farm Bill, which ultimately created the current rules for the entire system of certified organic agriculture in the United States.

Organic production systems encourage a healthy environment with as few inputs as possible. Organic agriculture is governed by the basic rule of allowing natural substances and not allowing synthetic materials. But in the real world, sufficient quantities of an input essential to organic production and processing — and not harmful to humans or the environment — are not always available in an organic form, so exceptions to this rule have been made. These exceptions make up the “National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances,” or simply the “National List.”

The National List identifies the synthetic substances that may be used in organic crop and livestock production, and prohibits the use of certain natural toxic substances in organic production. The list also identifies synthetic materials such as carbon dioxide, non-synthetic non-agricultural substances such as yeast, and non-organic agricultural substances such as Turkish bay leaves that may be used in organic handling and processing.
LEARNING FROM OTHERS AND COMPILING A LIST THAT WORKS

It took five years for the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB), a group of fifteen public volunteers appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture who represent various sectors of the organic industry, to complete a massive review of the inputs in use by organic producers and processors, and of state, private, and foreign organic certification programs to help craft the final organic regulations.

It was from this extensive research and engagement with everyone in the organic chain, and following thousands of comments to federal regulators, that the National List was compiled, reworked and reworked again, and then officially established on Dec. 21, 2000. The list mirrored most of the standards that organic producers and handlers were already abiding by through the various certification programs of the time, and was formulated to be flexible enough to accommodate the wide range of operations and products grown and raised in every region of the United States.

What are some of the allowable substances on the National List? For crop producers, the list includes things like newspapers for mulch and sticky traps for insect control. For livestock producers, it includes vaccines, an important part of the health regimen of an organic animal for which antibiotics are prohibited, and chlorine for disinfecting equipment. For organic processors, the list includes ingredients essential to processed products that can’t be produced organically, like baking soda, and certain vitamins and minerals and non-toxic sanitizers.

Of course, not all the allowed items on the National List are non-controversial. But all of the substances on the list are required to fulfill three critical criteria as specified by the Organic Foods Production Act: 1) Not be harmful to human health or the environment; 2) Be necessary to production because of unavailability of natural or organic alternatives, and 3) Be consistent with organic principles.

A NO-GROWTH TREND IN SYNTHETICS

The first several years of the implementation of the list were a period of fine-tuning, adjustment and just plain learning. Some materials essential to safe organic production had been overlooked and were added, like ozone gas for cleaning irrigation systems and animal enzymes for organic cheese production — both put on the list in 2003.

In 2007, the number of non-organic agricultural ingredients allowed in organic processed products was dramatically tightened. Processed products with the organic label must contain 95 percent certified organic ingredients. Before 2007, the agricultural ingredients that could be used in the remaining 5 percent category were not spelled out; ANY non-organic agricultural ingredient could be used if it was not available in organic form. In 2007, 38 specific substances were defined and added to the National List of non-organic ingredients allowed in a processed organic product. So with the addition of 38 materials to the National List, what had been an unlimited number of non-organic agricultural ingredients allowed in organic processed foods was reduced to a closed list of just several handfuls.

Since 2008, an even greater shift away from synthetics has occurred, with just 6 synthetics added to the list, and a total of 52 during that same time period removed, denied from the list, or further restricted.
Allowed synthetics since 2008: What is the trend?

No-Growth

with a strong preference for the use and development of nonsynthetic and organic alternatives.

6 synthetics have been added

Examples of synthetics added include a sanitizer used in processing facilities that is allowed only for secondary and indirect food contact surface sanitizing, a cheese wax used for organic mushroom production, a mite control product for honeybees for organic honey production.

52 have been removed, denied, or further restricted.

The synthetics added include a sanitizer in processing facilities used only for secondary and indirect food contact, a cheese wax used for organic mushroom production, a mite control product for organic honey production, and biodegradable mulch. Substances no longer allowed in organic products or denied permission to be added include non-organic hops in organic beer, bleached lecithin, unmodified rice starch, antibiotics for pears and apples, and dozens of synthetic substances and other materials. Additional restrictions recently added include a requirement to use organic yeast in certified products for human consumption and a requirement to use organic colors.

The no-growth trend in synthetics since 2008 shows a strong preference for the use and development of non-synthetic and organic alternatives.

A real-life example of a determined individual working within the NOSB system to replace an allowed synthetic material on the National List with a certified organic substitute occurred in 2013. The head of the company, which makes rice-based ingredients that food manufacturers use as alternatives to synthetic ingredients, submitted a petition in 2010 to remove silicon dioxide from the National List since his company had developed a rice-based certified organic alternative to the synthetic. In 2013, the NOSB amended the use of silicon dioxide and weighed in favor of organic rice hulls when available.
**National List Scorecard: Synthetics Added, Removed or Denied**

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* Requested for addition to the National List but denied

ENABLING ORGANIC TO GROW AND PRESERVING THE SYSTEM’S INTEGRITY

The system was more arduous and took longer than expected, but it worked. It was proof that the National List has the foresight to include synthetic ingredients when there are no organic or natural alternatives, and thereby enabling the organic industry to evolve and grow, but more importantly, the system provides a method to retire a synthetic substance and implement the organic alternative when it becomes available. And in the particular case of the maker of the rice-based organic alternative, it was a win-win deal for the company, with sales growing by over 150 percent!

The National List represents a process that is rigorous, fair and one that works. It reflects realistic organic practices, while taking into account current obstacles to ideal production. It encourages public scrutiny, comment and engagement.

In the past ten years, organic food sales in the United States have jumped from slightly more than $11 billion in 2004 to $35.9 billion in 2014, over 300 percent growth. The number of certified organic farms in the country, according to USDA’s recently released 2014 Organic Survey, is approaching 13,000, compared to 3,000 tops in the mid 1990s.

More certified organic farmers, more organic products, more organic processors and handlers, an organic farm-to-table supply chain that is growing every day, but still adhering to a tight set of stringent guidelines—that’s what the National List has made possible.
MEET THE NATIONAL ORGANIC STANDARDS BOARD

ROLE OF NOSB

Passage of the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA) in 1990 created the U. S. National Organic Standards (OFPA). The Act authorized a new U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Organic Program (NOP) to set national standards for the production, handling, and processing of organically grown agricultural products. USDA’s NOP is authorized to enforce OFPA and the organic regulations. In addition, the Program oversees mandatory certification of organic production. The Act also established the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB).

NOSB advises USDA on which production inputs should be allowed or prohibited in organic farming and processing. NOSB bases its decisions on specific criteria set forth in the Act and organic regulations. NOSB also makes recommendations on a wide variety of other standards issues, such as organic pet food standards, aquaculture standards, animal welfare standards, and organic inspector qualifications.

STRUCTURE OF NOSB

This 15-person citizen advisory board brings together volunteers from across the organic sector and around the United States. It is made up of four farmers/growers, two handlers/processors, one retailer, one scientist, three consumer/public interest advocates, three environmentalists, and one USDA accredited certifying agent. Each of these individuals participates in NOSB committees, with areas of focus ranging from crops and handling to materials and livestock.

PURPOSE OF THE NOSB MEETINGS

NOSB meets twice a year in a public forum to discuss and vote on subcommittee proposals related to the National List or other organic standards issues. NOSB subcommittees first publish proposals with a request for public comments. During NOSB meetings, the full board listens to public comments, discusses their proposals, and then votes on whether to pass the subcommittee proposals. NOSB then submits its final recommendations to USDA. Recommendations made by NOSB are not official policy until they are approved and adopted by USDA. NOSB values transparency and public input, inviting both advance written and in-person oral public comments to gain additional perspectives on its recommendations.

WHO ARE THE CURRENT MEMBERS?

Farmers/Growers: Colehour Bondera (HI), Carmela Beck (CA), Ashley Swaffar (AR), Nick Maravell (MD)

Handlers/Processors: Harold Austin (WA), Tom Chapman (CA)

Retailer: Lisa de Lima (MD)

Scientist: Zea Sonnabend (CA)

Consumer/Public Interest: Jean Richardson (VT), Jennifer Taylor (FL), C. Reuben Walker (LA)

Environmentalists/Resource Conservationists: Tracy Favre (TX), Francis Thicke (IA), VACANCY*

Accredited Certifying Agent: Robert (Mac) Stone (KY)

*Paula Daniels recently resigned—there is an open seat to be filled ASAP.
MEET THE NATIONAL ORGANIC STANDARDS BOARD

NOSB OFFICERS (2015)

Jean Richardson – Chairperson
Tracy Favre – Vice Chairperson
Harold Austin – Secretary

NOSB SUBCOMMITTEES

The NOSB’s six Subcommittees—Crops; Livestock; Handling; Materials; Compliance, Accreditation, and Certification; and Policy Development—meet regularly between public meetings to develop proposals and discussion documents for the full NOSB’s consideration. Additionally, the Executive Committee, a subset of the full NOSB, comprised of the 3 NOSB Officers and each of the Subcommittee Chairs, meets once a month to discuss topics related to the Board’s work.

COMPLIANCE, ACCREDITATION, CERTIFICATION
Carmela Beck, Chair; Lisa de Lima, Vice Chair; Nick Maravell, Jean Richardson, Tom Chapman, Jennifer Taylor

CROPS
Zea Sonnabend, Chair; Francis Thicke, Vice Chair; Harold Austin, Carmela Beck, Colehour Bondera

HANDLING
Tom Chapman, Chair; Harold Austin, Vice Chair; Lisa de Lima, Tracy Favre, Jean Richardson, Zea Sonnabend, Ashley Swaffar

LIVESTOCK/AQUACULTURE
Tracy Favre, Chair; Calvin Walker, Vice Chair; Colehour Bondera, Ashley Swaffar, Mac Stone, Jean Richardson, Francis Thicke

MATERIALS/GMO ad hoc
Calvin Walker, Chair; Zea Sonnabend, Vice Chair; Harold Austin, Colehour Bondera, Nick Maravell, Jennifer Taylor, Francis Thicke

POLICY DEVELOPMENT
Tracy Favre, Chair; Colehour Bondera, Mac Stone, Jean Richardson, Jennifer Taylor

INERTS WORKING GROUP
Zea Sonnabend
MICRONUTRIENTS: ANNOTATION CHANGE (PROPOSAL)

BACKGROUND

Micronutrients encompass the minor crop nutrients necessary for proper plant health including zinc, copper, iron, manganese, molybdenum, selenium, cobalt, and boron. Organic producers currently may only use these synthetic micronutrients when testing shows a deficiency and they cannot be used as a defoliant, herbicide, or desiccant. Without micronutrients, crop quality, yield, and resistance to pests and diseases can suffer. Producers traditionally use many techniques for determining when and if micronutrients should be included into their plant nutrition programs—including advice from crop consultants, published information from researchers and extension, observation of plant performance, and established regional soil deficiencies. However, the current annotation requires that farmers provide a test that shows a deficiency prior to use of any synthetic micronutrient.

NOSB SUMMARY

The subcommittee is proposing to amend the annotation for micronutrients by eliminating the words “by testing:”

205.601(j)(6) Micronutrients – not to be used as a defoliant, herbicide, or desiccant. Those made from nitrates or chlorides are not allowed. Soil deficiency must be documented by testing.

The subcommittee acknowledges that farmers use a variety of techniques in determining when micronutrients should be applied to their crops, and feels that this change will allow the deficiency to be documented by other types of testing, professional recommendations, or published information specific to a crop or region.

(Subcommittee Vote: 5 in favor; 0 against)

OTA POSITION

Based on feedback from OTA membership, we agree with the Crops Subcommittee that the annotation for micronutrients should be amended so that the various methods that farmers use to determine their crop nutrition needs can justify the use of these essential plant nutrients. This change will reduce the recordkeeping burden on organic farmers, allow them to more effectively fertilize their crops, and ensure that their crop quality, yield, or pest and disease resistance do not suffer as a result of an overly prescriptive annotation requirement.
EPA LIST 4: ANNOTATION CHANGE (PROPOSAL)

BACKGROUND

Inert ingredients play a key role in the effectiveness of a pesticide product, but are not considered “active” ingredients. Currently, inert ingredients used in approved organic pesticide products must appear on EPA’s List 4 – Inerts of Minimal Concern. EPA no longer maintains List 4, and there is a need to modernize the inerts evaluation system for organic pest control products. Because pesticide regulation occurs across agencies and organic pesticide products (and the inerts within the formulations) must comply with environmental and human health criteria, NOSB has looked to utilize a system for inert review that is administered by EPA and also takes into account the unique concerns around health and safety within organic production. NOSB has participated in discussions as part of the “Inerts Working Group” to develop a recommendation modernizing inerts review in organic pesticide products and aligning with the principles of organic farming and production.

NOSB SUMMARY

The Crops Subcommittee is proposing to amend the annotation for inerts by eliminating the reference to EPA’s List 4 – Inerts of Minimal Concern, and introducing four modern approaches to evaluating and approving inerts in organic pest control products:

205.601(m) and 205.603(e) – As synthetic inert ingredients as classified by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), for use with non-synthetic substances or synthetic substances listed in this section and used as an active pesticide ingredient in accordance with any limitations on the use of such substances.

(i) Substances permitted for use in minimal risk products exempt from pesticide registration under FIFRA section 25(b)

(ii) Substances included on the EPA’s Safer Chemical Ingredient List

(iii) Inert ingredients that are exempt from the requirement of a tolerance under 40 CFR 180.1122 – for use only in passive pheromone dispensers

(iv) [Reserved] (for any other inerts individually petitioned and reviewed)

The Crops Subcommittee understands that it will take time for EPA to evaluate the inerts currently in use in organic pesticide products to the Safer Chemical Ingredient List criteria, and, accordingly, does not propose a timeline for phasing in this new approach. Instead, it acknowledges that evaluation to the new criteria can begin immediately should the full Board approve this proposal, and, once manufacturers know which inerts will be allowed, they can begin the lengthy process of reformulation and product testing if inerts used in their products are no longer allowed.

(Subcommittee Vote: 5 in favor; 0 against)

The Livestock Subcommittee also supports the inerts review approach that the Crop Subcommittee developed, and recommends the identical proposal for listing on the National List for organic livestock producers.

(Subcommittee Vote: 5 in favor; 0 against; 1 absent)
OTA POSITION

Based on feedback from outreach to the biopesticide industry and OTA membership, we agree with the Crops Subcommittee’s approach to modernizing inert review for organic pest control products. While we acknowledge that changes to review criteria may result in the need to reformulate products that farmers rely on to control pests and diseases, it is necessary to update organic inert approval policies. OTA supports the proposal as written. It also encourages USDA and EPA to prioritize evaluation of all substances currently on EPA’s List 4 to Safer Chemical Ingredient List criteria to provide input manufacturers with adequate time to assess what changes will need to occur to product formulas, and to test the new formulas for efficacy in organic production systems.
WHAT IS AN INERT INGREDIENT?

Inert ingredients are components of pesticide products other than the “active” ingredient that play a key role in the effectiveness of the product. “Active” ingredients in organic pest control inputs must be either non-synthetic (e.g., neem oil, bacillus thuringiensis, granulosis virus) or approved and listed on the National List of approved synthetic substances allowed in organic crop production (e.g., pheromones, elemental sulfur, horticultural oil). Inert ingredients are mixed with these “actives” to improve product effectiveness or longevity or for other functional properties. Without inert ingredients, pesticide products could not be applied using commercial application equipment, would degrade too rapidly in sunlight, or could not be made into a solution in the mixing tank. These ingredients are necessary for farmers to have effective tools in combatting pests and diseases in their crops.

WHO REGULATES INERTS?

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulates pesticide products and the inert ingredients contained within. There are a number of regulatory mechanisms for approval and oversight of inerts. The least toxic class of pesticides is referred to as “25(b)” pesticides, and includes substances such as limonene, rosemary oil, and thyme oil. These active ingredients are exempt from needing to be registered with EPA, and EPA has established a list of inert ingredients that are allowed to be included in these types of products. Another mechanism EPA has developed for approving inert ingredients is through EPA’s Safer Choice program, which evaluates pesticides and inert ingredients with stringent human health and environmental criteria. Lastly, EPA has also granted “tolerance exemption” in the Code of Federal Regulations for many inerts allowed in pesticide products that have direct food contact. “Tolerance exemption” is granted to some pesticides and inerts when EPA has reviewed toxicity and exposure data, and found the substance to be safe. These three systems for evaluating inert ingredients provide the structure for how NOSB proposes to modernize the review process for inerts used in organic farming products, so that organic principles around human and environmental health remain paramount.

KEEPING ORGANIC THE GOLD STANDARD

The NOSB proposal for modernizing inerts review in organic pesticide products is built upon EPA’s two structures for least-toxic inert approvals: 25(b) inerts and Safer Choice evaluation. These two programs hinge upon review criteria based around human and environmental safety, guaranteeing that the inert ingredients used in pesticide formulations are safe and the least-toxic available. NOSB has also proposed to allow the third category of less toxic substances—tolerance exempt inert ingredients—in passive pheromone dispensers only. Passive pheromones are plastic ties that are hung onto fruit trees to disrupt mating cycles of pests, and generally are not applied directly to fruit. By adopting the strictest review criteria EPA has developed and making an allowance for tolerance exempt inerts in pheromones (a foundational tool for Integrated Pest Management and organic production), NOSB is ensuring that organic pesticides must meet the strictest and least-toxic regulatory criteria EPA has developed.
LAMINARIN – PETITION TO CLASSIFY AS NON-SYNTHETIC (PROPOSAL)

BACKGROUND

NOSB received a petition for Laminarin, a seaweed extract for disease control that is EPA registered for that purpose. The National Organic Program (NOP), in its review of the eligibility of the petition, stated that the substance may be classified as synthetic based on its preliminary review. When NOP forwarded the petition to NOSB in June 2013, it acknowledged that the decision was based on draft guidance and that other aquatic plant extracts are classified as synthetic. In its review, the Crops Subcommittee also voted that it was non-synthetic by a vote of 5-2-0 and brought it to the full NOSB in the spring of 2014. NOSB decided that there needed to be a Limited Technical Review (TR)* to clarify whether the extraction and purification process resulted in a synthetic material, and to examine the environmental effects of seaweed harvest and processing. That TR was completed in May 2015.

*Similar to a full Technical Review, only limited in scope. In this case, it examined the classification of Laminarin.

NOSB SUMMARY

The subcommittee proposal is to classify Laminarin as a non-synthetic substance. This decision was based on information provided in the TR and in NOP’s Draft Guidance on Classification of Materials. Based on this information, NOSB determined that Laminarin is not chemically changed during extraction, and the final material occurs in nature. Because Laminarin was classified as non-synthetic, it does not need to be added to the National List.

(Subcommittee Vote: 5 in favor; 0 against; 0 absent)

OTA POSITION

Based on the information provided in the Technical Review for each material and NOP’s Draft Guidance on Classification of Materials (NOP Guidance 5033), OTA concurs with NOSB’s assessment that Laminarin should be classified as “non-synthetic.”
BACKGROUND

Lignin Sulfonate is currently allowed in organic production for two uses. The first is as a dust suppressant and chelating agent in organic fertilizer products, and the second is as a flotation agent in the post-harvest handling of organic fruits (most commonly pears). OTA submitted a petition to remove Lignin Sulfonate from the National List for its second use (flotation aid) because industry feedback indicates that pear handlers have either replaced Lignin Sulfonate with other approved floatation aids, or have modernized their pear handling lines to “float-less” systems that do not require the use of any flotation aid.

NOSB SUMMARY

NOSB requested additional industry feedback on whether the removal of Lignin Sulfonate would disrupt any organic businesses, and whether the use of Lignin Sulfonate should be subject to documented monitoring of wastewater in the OSP. It did not receive comments in support of relisting the substance. Thus, it has determined that Lignin Sulfonate should be removed from the National List as a flotation aid because it is no longer necessary in organic production.

(Subcommittee Vote: 5 in favor; 0 against; 1 absent)

OTA POSITION

OTA continues to feel that Lignin Sulfonate is no longer necessary in organic crop production and supports the subcommittee recommendation to remove this substance from the National List as an approved floatation aid in post-harvest handling of organic crops.
SULFURIC ACID – PETITION TO ADD (PROPOSAL)

BACKGROUND

Sulfuric acid is a strong acid that was petitioned for addition to the National List as a solubilizing agent to make micronutrients more available for plant uptake. It would be used to adjust pH in the manufacture of micronutrients to create chelates of boron, magnesium, calcium, manganese, iron, copper, and zinc through solubilization of oxides of those elements and complexation of them with amino acids.

NOSB SUMMARY

Crops Subcommittee review of sulfuric acid for this purpose raises concerns that treating micronutrients with sulfuric acid would produce forms of micronutrients that are highly refined and would circumvent the natural soil biological processes central to organic farming systems, thus indicating it is not compatible with organic principles. There are additional concerns around sulfuric acid’s impact on human health and the environment, and it is not clear that solubilized micronutrients are necessary for organic production. Therefore, the Crops Subcommittee recommends not adding sulfuric acid to the National List for this purpose.

(Subcommittee Vote: 0 in favor; 5 against)

OTA POSITION

OTA concurs with the Crops Subcommittee that sulfuric acid used to solubilize micronutrients fails all three National List criteria and should not be added to the National List.

BROWN SEAWEED EXTRACTS – PETITION TO ADD (PROPOSAL)

BACKGROUND

Brown Seaweed Extract is an extract of Laminaria species or Ascophyllum nodosum that utilizes strong acids and bases in the production process. The final product is a fertilizing material that is described as a plant strengthener, and is usually applied through foliar applications or fertigation.

NOSB SUMMARY

The Crops Subcommittee has determined that Brown Seaweed Extracts must be classified as synthetic because potassium hydroxide is used in the manufacturing process to establish a near neutral pH. It further concludes that since the Organic Foods Production Act prohibits the use of any fertilizer containing synthetic ingredients, Brown Seaweed Extracts are not compatible with organic production and should not be added to the National List.

(Subcommittee Vote: 5 in favor; 0 against)

OTA POSITION

OTA agrees with the Crops Subcommittee that Brown Seaweed Extracts are not compatible with organic production and should not be added to the National List.
ALGINIC ACID—RE-CLASSIFICATION FROM TO SYNTHETIC (PROPOSAL)

Carnauba Wax—Reclassify as Agricultural (Proposal)

Background for Alginic Acid

Alginic acid is a stabilizer, emulsifier and thickener used in soup and soup mixes. It is derived from wild harvested seaweeds and manufactured on an industrial scale through a chemical separation process that involves maceration, alkali treatment and acid precipitation of alginic acid from brown seaweeds. It is currently classified as a non-synthetic substance allowed for use in products labeled “Organic” (95%+) and “Made with” (70%+) products. In the 1995 technical review for alginic acid, the reviewers determined that the material was non-synthetic. However, given NOP’s draft guidance on Classification of Materials (guidance that helps make determine whether a substance is synthetic or non-synthetic) and the information posted in the 2015 Technical Review, alginic acid can be viewed as “synthetic.”

Nosb Summary for Alginic Acid

The subcommittee is proposing to reclassify alginic acid as a “synthetic” processing ingredient allowed in “Organic” and “Made with” products. The subcommittee believes the alkali treatment and acid precipitation render the final product synthetic because a chemical change occurs, and the resulting substance is a form that does not occur in nature.

(Subcommittee Vote: 6 in favor; 0 against; 1 absent)

Background for Carnauba Wax

Carnauba wax is an exudate from the leaves and buds of a palm tree, which grows almost exclusively in northeastern Brazil. It is used to coat fruit and vegetables, candies and as a base for chewing gum. During the creation of the National List, Carnauba was included in the review of “Fruit Waxes” under the Crops Committee because it was considered a post-harvest handling substance. It was never classified as either agricultural or non-agricultural at the time. When the rule came out, it was on the Handling section of the National List as a non-synthetic, non-agricultural substance.

Nosb Summary Carnauba Wax

The subcommittee is proposing to reclassify carnauba wax as agricultural. The subcommittee compared how carnauba wax is extracted from palm trees to the Draft Guidance on Classification of Materials and decided it could be considered agricultural. The motion therefore is to move carnauba wax from the non-synthetic, non-agricultural section of the National List (205.605(a)) to the section that houses agricultural ingredients/processing aids that are allowed only when organic form are unavailable.

(Subcommittee Vote: 6 in favor; 0 against; 1 absent)
OTA POSITION

Based on the information provided in the Technical Review for each material and NOP’s Draft Guidance on Classification of Materials (NOP Guidance 5033), OTA concurs with NOSB’s assessment that Alginic Acid should be classified as “synthetic” and Carnauba Wax should be classified as “agricultural.” As a side note of caution, however, we’re uncertain about the urgency to reclassify both of these substances at this time. We would like to point out the risk of making such a determination based on draft guidance.

OTA recognizes that NOSB is actively and regularly making classification decisions and, in doing so, must use the best information available in a timely matter. In other words, NOSB cannot put its work on hold until NOP finalizes the guidance on classification of materials. NOSB must respond to petitions, sunset requirements and requests from NOP in a timely manner, and the use of NOP’s draft guidance is appropriate. OTA acknowledges the good work the subcommittee has completed in drafting these proposals, and we’re not suggesting the proposals be tabled. We largely agree with NOP’s draft classification of materials and, in the case of alginic acid and carnauba wax, we believe the classification decision is fairly straight-forward. However, going forward, we believe it would be prudent to hold off on NOSB initiated reclassification activity until final guidance is issued. This would eliminate the potential need to engage in rulemaking to correct a decision that was made according to DRAFT guidance but differs with the ultimate determination made under FINAL guidance.
HANDLING SUBCOMMITTEE

SODIUM AND POTASSIUM LACTATE—PETITION TO ADD (PROPOSAL)

BACKGROUND

Sodium and/or potassium lactate are generally produced from natural (fermented) lactic acid, which is then reacted with either sodium hydroxide or potassium hydroxide, respectively. They are used in meat processing as a pathogen inhibitor. Both sodium lactate and potassium lactate have been allowed for use in organic handling since January 22, 2004, when the National Organic Program rendered their use acceptable. This decision (to not require a petition for sodium and potassium lactate for inclusion to the National List) was originally based on the fact that all three of the materials used to produce sodium lactate and potassium lactate were already approved and on the National List (aka lactic acid, sodium hydroxide and potassium hydroxide). That decision was not consistent with previous NOSB recommendations on classification of materials. The intent of this proposal is to correct that previous decision and go through the appropriate petition process.

NOSB SUMMARY

The subcommittee is proposing to add sodium and potassium lactate to the National List as allowed synthetics for use as an antimicrobial agent only. It is not expressing concerns about human health or environmental impact, and it doesn’t believe that ancillary substances are used. In order to help shape the final decision, it requested the following information regarding the extent that these two materials are being used:

• Additional ways that these materials are currently being used other than the original petitioned use (microbial use for meat and poultry); and
• Between sodium lactate and potassium lactate, which one is more commonly used than the other?

(Subcommittee Vote: 4 in favor; 1 against; 2 abstain; 0 absent)

OTA POSITION

OTA agrees that NOP’s decision was not consistent with previous NOSB recommendations on classification of materials, and we support NOSB’s efforts to take these two materials through the appropriate petition process to see whether they meet OFPA and National List criteria. Member outreach was inconclusive as to whether these two materials are needed. In our review, however, we believe any allowance should be limited to microbial use for meat and poultry processing. In terms of usage, it appears that sodium lactate is more commonly used. One member reported the use of high pressure processing as an effective alternative. However, we expect that this technology is very expensive and is out of reach for many small and regional operations, particularly artisan and specialty meat processors. We also note that sodium lactate is allowed under the European Union (EU) organic regulations as an approved food additive for use in processing foodstuffs of animal origin only and is listed as follows: “Milk-based and meat products.” Potassium lactate, however, is not allowed in the EU.
BACKGROUND

The Organic Trade Association (OTA) is petitioning to revise the current rules to require the use of organic flavors when they are commercially available. Natural flavors are a broad category on the National List, and have been included on the list since it was first implemented in 2002. Since that time, many organic flavors have been developed and are being successfully used by many companies. However, the regulations as written do not require the use of organic flavors. All use of organic flavors is voluntary. The number of organic flavors in the marketplace is now substantial, so OTA is petitioning to revise the current listing of natural flavors to require the use of organic flavors when they are available in the necessary quality, quantity or form. The goal of the petition is to further the usage of organic flavors while not negatively disrupting business.

NOSB SUMMARY

In support of OTA’s petition, the NOSB Handling Subcommittee is recommending the listing of Natural Flavors on the National List to be revised to read as:

- Flavors – Non-synthetic flavors may be used when organic flavors are not commercially available. All flavors must be derived from organic or non-synthetic sources only, and must not be produced using synthetic solvents and carrier systems or any artificial preservative."

(Subcommittee Vote: 7 in favor; 0 against; 0 absent)

OTA POSITION

OTA has long advocated for the use and development of organic flavors. We believe the organic flavor supply has grown to a size where it is no longer appropriate to simply allow the use of non-organic natural flavors when organic forms may be commercially available. Since the first recommendation by NOSB to include the use of Natural Flavors in organic foods in 1995, there has been the expectation that over time, manufacturers would begin to produce certified organic flavors, and efforts would be made to support the use and development of organic flavors. During the NOSB 2012 Sunset Review, in response to public comments expressing the availability of organic flavors, NOSB acknowledged the evolution of the organic flavor industry and communicated that “the full category should not be re-listed in five years when next reviewed for sunset.” Given the growing supply of organic flavors and the roughly 180 certified flavor companies in business at this time, OTA does not believe the organic sector can afford to continue its business without including some requirement to use organic flavors. OTA is requesting that NOSB and the organic sector at-large encourage and support continuous improvement by mandating the use of organic flavors in products labeled “Organic” when commercially available.
HANDLING SUBCOMMITTEE

ANCILLARY SUBSTANCES FOR MICROORGANISMS, PECTIN AND YEAST (PROPOSAL)

BACKGROUND
Several handling substances on the National List are multi-component substances where the listed ingredient on the National List is combined with additional ingredients (e.g., carriers, stabilizers and antioxidants) to provide a necessary technical effect. One example is the listing for microorganisms that may be used in organic processing. Microorganisms are the critical ingredient used to make fermented foods such as yogurt, soy sauce, wine and cheese. When a certified operator purchases a microorganism product such a dairy culture or wine yeast, the product will include additional ingredients to “carry” and feed the microscopic living organisms. The product may also contain ingredients that will stabilize or preserve the microorganisms until they are used. The organisms would die without the presence of the additional ingredients. NOSB is referring to these added ingredients as “ancillary substances.”

In November 2011, NOP asked NOSB to clarify whether ancillary substances should be allowed in or on organic processed products and to develop a process for their review. In 2013, NOSB made a recommendation to review these substances in accordance with the organic law as they come up for sunset or when processing inputs are petitioned for addition to the National List. NOP responded in support of their review and agreed that they do not need to be individually listed on the National List. NOP stated that they could communicate restrictions or prohibitions in an annotation for a generic substance or in published guidance regarding permitted substances for organic handling. NOP outlined the review procedure NOSB should use, and given the new approach, requested that they use microorganisms as a trial run. This proposal is in response to NOP’s request, and it also includes pectin and yeast.

NOSB SUMMARY
The Handling Subcommittee’s three separate proposals each include a chart that lists the functional classes and corresponding ancillary substances that may be used in microorganism, yeast or pectin. The proposal clarifies that ancillary substances that fall within one of the functional classes listed in each chart do not need to be further reviewed to be used. Any new functional class of ancillaries will have to be petitioned.

Motion: To approve the functional classes of ancillary substances in the chart for use with the following:
• Pectin - (Subcommittee Vote: 7 in favor; 0 against; 0 absent)
• Yeast - (Subcommittee Vote: 7 in favor; 0 against; 0 absent)
• Microorganisms - (Subcommittee Vote: 7 in favor; 0 against; 0 absent)

OTA POSITION
OTA generally supports the proposal. However, we continue to be concerned about the confusing nature of this topic and the potential for inconsistent implementation. OTA believes that NOSB’s recommendation should be incorporated into draft NOP guidance, namely the “Permitted Substance List (PSL) for Handling” that NOP is in the progress of drafting. A draft proposal will allow an additional comment period for those who may not be following the NOSB process. It will also create a formal pathway for submitting comments on the status of ancillary substances as we move forward, since the public can comment on NOP guidance at any time. We also request that NOSB develop a recommendation to NOP on the use of a template with standardized language and definitions that may be used by ACAs and certified operators to collect the information needed to determine compliance according to NOP guidance. This will help facilitate consistent review and compliance by certifying agencies and certified operators.
LIVESTOCK SUBCOMMITTEE

LIDOCAINE & PROCAINE: ANNOTATION CHANGE (DISCUSSION)

BACKGROUND

Lidocaine and procaine are local anesthetics used by organic livestock producers to reduce or prevent pain during minor surgeries performed on organic livestock. They numb only a localized area, and are critical for humane treatment of animals that must undergo minor surgery. These anesthetics are currently allowed to be used on organic livestock with an annotation that requires a withdrawal period of 90 days after administering to livestock intended for slaughter and 7 days after administering to dairy animals.

NOSB SUMMARY

The Livestock Subcommittee is proposing to amend the annotation for micronutrients by reducing the withdrawal period for slaughter stock from 90 days to 8 days. They indicate that there is no scientific rationale for a 90-day withdrawal period. Additionally, NOSB has historically recommended a doubling of FDA recommended withdrawal periods when approving other organic livestock treatments. FDA currently recommends a withdrawal period of 4 days for subcutaneous use of lidocaine on slaughter animals. Based on this, the Livestock Subcommittee is requesting feedback from the organic sector on the current uses of lidocaine and procaine, and the appropriateness of reducing the withdrawal period for both local anesthetics used on slaughter stock from 90 days to 8 days (2x the current FDA recommendation for lidocaine).

(Subcommittee Vote: 5 in favor; 0 against)

OTA POSITION

Based on feedback from OTA’s Sunset surveys and membership feedback, we support the continued allowance for local anesthetics in organic livestock production. OTA believes the Livestock Subcommittee is taking a rational approach in amending the annotation and reducing the withdrawal period for these two anesthetics used on organic slaughter stock.
BACKGROUND
Currently, three parasiticides are allowed for emergency treatment only of organic dairy animals (Ivermectin, Moxidectin, and Fenbendazole). Organic livestock farmers cannot use parasiticides routinely, but sick animals must be treated. There is currently a 90-day withdrawal period for dairy animals if they must be treated, and meat from animals treated with parasiticides can never be sold as organic. Moxidectin carries an additional annotation, which limits its use to the control of internal parasites only, and Fenbendazole can only be used by or on the lawful written order of a licensed veterinarian.

NOSB SUMMARY
The Livestock Subcommittee is requesting input from the organic sector about the continued appropriateness of the various annotations applied to parasiticides, and whether their use should be expanded to include emergency treatment of slaughter stock and fiber-bearing animals like wool sheep. Specifically, it is requesting input on the following questions:

1. Should the milk withholding period be modified for any or all of the parasiticides? If so, how many days for Moxidectin, Fenbendazole and Ivermectin?
2. Should minimal use of parasiticides be allowed in organic slaughter stock such as is permitted under Canadian Organic standards with one treatment for slaughter animals under one year old, and two treatments for older animals (requiring more treatments will lose organic status)?
3. Should sheep fleece and wool be allowed to be certified organic even if use of parasiticides was necessary at some time in the animal’s life?
4. Should use of Moxidectin be changed to allow both internal and external use?
5. Should use of parasiticides be allowed only under veterinarian advice?

(Subcommittee Vote: 6 in favor; 0 against)

OTA POSITION
OTA supports the continued availability of effective parasite control materials for emergency use only in organic livestock production. Milk withholding times for all parasiticides should be science-based, and OTA would support amending these withholding times provided adequate scientific justification was provided. Expanding the allowed use of parasiticides to slaughter stock could encourage additional meat producers to decide to transition to organic production. However, feedback from OTA members indicates that the use of parasiticides is seen as a “crutch” for poor pasture management, and should remain a tool only for the emergency treatment of dairy animals. Allowing the emergency use of parasiticides on sheep raised for organic wool, while keeping them prohibited for use on organic sheep raised for meat, could support the growth of an organic wool market without impacting the integrity of organic meat, and should be seriously considered by NOSB. The allowed use pattern for Moxidectin should also be science-based. If external use does not pose any additional threat to soil life than internal use, it should not be restricted further than other parasiticides. Lastly, the use of parasiticides is only allowed for emergency situations, which, historically, producers have not had to justify with a veterinarian recommendation. Requiring that all parasiticide use come at the advice of a veterinarian could reduce concerns that producers were using these tools inappropriately, but could also pose animal welfare concerns if necessary treatment of sick animals was delayed due to the unavailability of a qualified veterinarian.
TREATING LIVESTOCK PARASITES

Organic livestock producers are faced with the challenge of managing their livestock for optimum health without the routine use of many traditional medications, including synthetic parasiticides. Organic livestock producers must first prevent disease and parasites, and they rotate pastures, provide adequate nutrition, and implement preventive health care practices to accomplish this goal. Despite all these preventive practices, internal parasites can be fatal to livestock, and organic farmers are not allowed to withhold treatment of animals to preserve their organic status. Organic dairy farmers can use three different parasiticides to keep their animals alive in emergency situations, provided they withhold milk from those treated animals for 90 days. Meat animals, once treated with parasiticides, can never be labeled as organic. Despite these allowances and requirements, synthetic parasiticides are rarely, if ever, used on organic farms.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Some synthetic parasiticides can remain active after passing through livestock and have adverse effects on soil biology, especially larger invertebrates like dung beetles. Due to the extremely infrequent use of these substances in organic livestock production, the collateral damage to soil biology on organic farms from synthetic parasiticides is correspondingly very small. Regardless, Ivermectin is one of the synthetic parasiticides available to organic livestock producers, and it is also the treatment that has been shown to have the most significant impacts on the health of dung beetles when they consume manure from treated livestock.

Ivermectin has been a reliable way to manage parasites in emergency situations, but now, two additional parasiticides—Moxidectin and Fenbendazole—are approved options for emergency treatment of organic livestock. These two alternatives have less harmful effects on the soil eco-system. Thus, embracing these alternatives illustrates a tenant of organic production—that of continuous improvement.

THE CHALLENGE BEFORE NOSB

NOSB is charged with determining whether inputs currently allowed in organic farming remain necessary and, in the light of new information, safe for the environment and human health. At this meeting, NOSB will need to weigh the potential side effects of synthetic parasiticides on soil biology with their necessity in treating livestock on an emergency basis. NOSB must once again address whether the option of an effective emergency treatment for parasites outweighs the potential side effects.

Is Ivermectin still necessary given the allowance to use either Moxidectin and/or Fenbendazole? A case can be made either way, but it is critical that the decision be made knowing that these treatments are seldom, if ever, used on organic farms, and when they are used, it is only to save an animal’s life.
SIDEBAR: DUNG BEETLES ARE ESSENTIAL

Dung beetles are a critical group of insects for pasture ecosystems. They play a key role in assimilating animal manure into soils, aerating those soils, and competing for food resources with animal parasites like the horn and face flies. Without a healthy population of dung beetles in some regions’ pasturelands, fly populations explode, manure fouls pastures, and soil compaction increases. These invertebrates are part of the complicated soil food web, which balances nutrients and soil structure. Implementing farming practices that support this soil ecosystem is a foundational element of organic production.

Dung beetles tunnel through the soil and incorporate manure to improve soil fertility. Tunneling also helps improve soil infiltration and water retention. Research shows that with a good dung beetle population, soil is better aerated, and nitrogen content is much better.

A “roller” dung beetle pushing a ball of doo away from the pile to munch on later or to use as a place to lay their eggs.
MATERIALS SUBCOMMITTEE

2015 RESEARCH PRIORITIES—(PROPOSAL)

BACKGROUND

At its April 2011 meeting, NOSB created a process to collect, prioritize and advocate for research related to use of materials in organic production or handling that would be useful for researchers in many fields to defend and solicit funds for research that benefits organic production and handling. The Materials Subcommittee accepted the request, and created a formalized approach for passing a proposal once a year that includes a list of prioritized research topics as supported by organic stakeholders. Criteria for research topics include:

- Persistent and chronic (i.e., perennial topics of debate and need)
- Challenging
- Controversial (i.e., topics on which there are widely differing perspectives or for which there have been close NOSB votes)
- Nebulous (i.e., the research need is hard to identify but the organic agriculture need is clear), for example, improved methods for weed control.
- Lacking in primary research. That is, topics for which there is no active research being conducted, primarily relating to the criteria in OFPA for review of materials.
- Relevant to assessing the need for alternative cultural, biological, and mechanical methods to materials on the National List.

NOSB SUMMARY

The subcommittee is proposing to adopt the proposal on NOSB Research priorities for 2015. The subcommittee proposal is to adopt several new research topics as NOSB priorities to help inspire appropriate research. The new priorities to be added to the existing research areas include:

- Prevention of GMO Contamination: Evaluation of effectiveness
- Prevention and Management of Parasites: Using a system-based approach
- Herd Flock and Health: A look at successful models
- Evaluation of Methionine in the Context of a System Approach in Organic Poultry
- Chlorine Materials: Best use for effective results and effective alternatives
- Alternatives to Copper for Disease and Algae Control

(Subcommittee Vote: 6 in favor; 0 against; 1 absent)

THE ORGANIC CENTER POSITION

The Organic Center is pleased to see the inclusion of research priorities related to livestock management and the development of alternatives for materials on the National List. The Center relies on the annual NOSB Research Priorities to guide the development of its own research projects. Some of our past and ongoing research projects that directly addressed NOSB research priorities include the completion of a report entitled Grower Lessons and Emerging Research for Developing an Integrated Non-Antibiotic Fire Blight Control Program in Organic Fruit, as well as research to develop organic solutions for citrus greening, assess soil health on organic farms, and protect organic agriculture from inadvertent pesticide residue contamination. The Center also suggests the consideration of manure and compost safety and pollinator health as topics for inclusion in the Research Priorities for 2015/2016 given their relevance to current events and implications for future regulatory decisions.
PREVENTION STRATEGY GUIDANCE FOR EXCLUDED METHODS—(PROPOSAL)

BACKGROUND

The organic regulations prohibit the use of excluded methods (GMOs), and consumers clearly expect that the organic products they purchase are non-GMO. Among the greatest threats to organic production are the proliferation of GMOs and the risk of unavoidable residual contamination it poses to our food supply. In early 2014, the NOSB Materials Subcommittee submitted a work plan request to the National Organic Program (NOP) to develop a prevention strategy for GMOs in crops and handling. On April 24, 2014, NOP sent a response memo to NOSB entitled, “Improved Guidance on Preventing GMOs Presence in Organic Products.” NOP requested that NOSB provide recommendations regarding best management practices for prevention of unintended GMO presence. In response, the Materials/GMO Subcommittee drafted a discussion document for the spring 2015 meeting to gather information on precautions that organic producers and handlers should take to prevent and minimize contact with GMOs in organic production and processing. This final proposal incorporates comments that were received from the public in response to the spring 2015 discussion document.

NOSB SUMMARY

The subcommittee is requesting feedback from organic stakeholders on the proposed precautions that organic producers and handlers should take to prevent and minimize contact with GMOs in organic production and processing. Certified operators are already extensively carrying out such practices, but it would be a stronger point in future prevention strategies and policy efforts if it were spelled out in formal guidance from the National Organic Program. The subcommittee is proposing to accept the proposal as written.

(Subcommittee Vote: 6 in favor; 0 against; 1 absent)

OTA POSITION

OTA supports the proposal, and we urge the full Board to pass the recommendation as written at this fall 2015 meeting. NOSB’s continued work on the topic of GMOs is paramount. OTA continues to be very supportive of moving recommendations forward to NOP that will improve the practices used to keep GMOs out of organic seed, feed and crops. We believe it is in the best interest of the organic sector for NOP to include guidance in the NOP Handbook helping farmers and handlers to further prevent GMO contact with organic products, and assisting ACAs to assess the efficacy of an organic operation’s GMO contact prevention plan.
BACKGROUND & VOTING PROCEDURES

NOSB’S SUNSET PROCESS

Organic regulations prohibit the use of most synthetic inputs in organic farming and livestock, and largely require the use of organic ingredients in organic processed foods. Any exceptions are made because of the lack of natural or organic alternatives to a necessary or essential production or handling input. In addition to the necessity being signed off on, the inputs must be fully vetted by the National Organic Standard Board (NOSB) and public to ensure that their use will not adversely impact humans or the environment. Two-thirds of the NOSB must then vote to add the input to the “National List of Approved and Prohibited Substances.” Once an input has been added to the National List, NOSB must review the input every five years. This is known as the “Sunset process.” Through this process, NOSB can remove inputs from the National List based on any new information regarding adverse impact on human health or the environment, or the availability of a natural or organic alternative. After NOSB completes its Sunset Review and provides a recommendation, USDA either renews or removes the input to complete the Sunset process.

PUBLIC COMMENT PROCESS

There are now two public comment opportunities before NOSB completes its National List 2017 Sunset Review. The inputs scheduled to sunset in 2017 underwent their first stage of review during the spring 2015 public comment and discussion cycle. The information collected largely shaped the subcommittee proposals posted for the fall 2015 public comment period and public meeting. The full Board is now taking into consideration the feedback it has received over two comment periods along with its own research. It will vote at the fall 2015 meeting on whether to renew their allowance on the National List for another five years.

OTA’S ON-LINE SURVEY SYSTEM

To help facilitate a thorough comment and review process, OTA created an electronic survey for each input under review for 2017. The surveys are user-friendly, available to every NOP certificate holder, and include 7-10 questions addressing the necessity (farm and livestock) or essentiality (handling) of the National List input under review. The names of the companies submitting the information are confidential (not disclosed to OTA). To ensure wide distribution of the surveys beyond OTA membership, OTA worked with Accredited Certifying Agencies (ACAs) to distribute the survey links to all of their certified clients as well as to targeted clients they know are using the inputs under review. OTA also worked through its Farmers Advisory Council (FAC) to help assist in distribution to NOP certified farmers. OTA hopes these efforts and the feedback gathered from certified farmers and handlers will help and inform NOSB in its review process as it relates to the necessity or essentiality of the National List inputs undergoing their five-year Sunset Review.

1. OTA’s Farmers Advisory Council was established in 2013 to formalize two-way communication between OTA and member producers as well as regional organic producer organizations across the United States. Through dialog and input, FAC gives organic farmers a voice to directly influence OTA’s policy and provides an avenue for OTA to share information and advocacy work with this stakeholder group.
NOSB VOTING PROCEDURES

NOSB MOTIONS AND VOTES

As specified in the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA), two-thirds of the votes cast at an NOSB meeting at which a quorum is present shall be decisive of any motion \([\S 2119(i)]\). As there are 15 NOSB members, 10 votes in favor are needed to pass any recommendation. For the fall 2015 meeting, there are only 14 members as one member has recently resigned. Ten votes are still needed to pass any recommendation.

- **Non-material related proposals**: two-thirds of NOSB members must vote in favor of the motion for the recommendation to pass.
- **Petition to add or remove a material to/from the National List**: two-thirds of NOSB members must vote in favor of adding (or removing) the material in order for USDA to have the authority to add or remove the material to/from the National List.
- **Sunset Review proposals**: two-thirds of NOSB members must vote in favor of removing a material in order for USDA to have the authority to amend the National List. If two-thirds of NOSB vote to remove and USDA accepts the recommendation, USDA then will pursue rulemaking.

**SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES**: If there are substantive changes made to a subcommittee proposal based on public comment, the proposal must go back to the subcommittee and a revised proposal must be released for further public comment prior to the subsequent NOSB meeting.

WHY DO THE SUNSET SUBCOMMITTEE PROPOSALS INCLUDE A “MOTION TO REMOVE?”

NOSB believes that the full Board should have the opportunity to complete the review of each sunset material by voting. NOP has stated that to do this, a motion to remove should be brought from the subcommittee for each substance. The purpose of a motion is to introduce the topic for consideration while the vote determines the final recommendation. Even if the subcommittee “motion to remove” fails to receive a simple majority, the motion will still be put forward to the full Board for review. The “motion to remove” is then considered and voted on by the full Board, and needs to receive a 2/3 majority to recommend removal.

EXAMPLE VOTING PROCESS FOR A “MOTION TO REMOVE”

*Subcommittee Vote (simple majority is needed to pass a motion)*
- Yes = in favor to delist
- No = in favor to renew
- If majority vote yes, the recommendation to the full Board is to remove the material
- If majority vote no, the recommendation to the full Board is to renew the material
- Subcommittee proposal is forwarded to the full Board for a vote regardless of whether the motion failed/passed

*Full Board Vote (2/3 majority (10 of 15) is needed is needed to remove a material)*
- The full Board votes on the subcommittee’s motion to remove
- Yes = in favor to remove
- No = in favor to renew
- 2/3 of the 15 member board would need to vote YES to delist the material
- Example: 10 yes, 5 no would mean that the motion passes, and the final recommendation would be to delist the material
- Example: 8 no, 7 yes would mean the motion fails, and the material would remain on the National List.
Shaped largely by the first of the two public comment opportunities for 2017 Sunset Review, the NOSB subcommittees have identified several inputs that they are considering removing from the National List because they do not appear to be in use by industry or they may not be consistent with National List criteria. They have also identified some inputs on the National List where an annotation change is needed to further clarify the allowances or restrictions placed on the material’s use.

The list below includes a description of the National List input, the concern or issue raised by subcommittee members, and the subcommittee vote to remove or relist. You will also see icons that communicate the results of OTA’s Sunset Survey System and a place where you can record the final vote of the full Board.

**KEY:**
- The restricted toolbox icon = Surveys/member feedback indicate the input is necessary to organic production
- Surveys/member feedback indicate the input is no longer necessary/essential
- Lack of a symbol = No survey responses or member feedback was received

### CROPS SUBCOMMITTEE (CS)

**205.601 – SYNTHEtics ALLOWed IN ORGANIC CROP PRODUCTION**

**ALGICIDES, SANITIZERS, AND PEST, WEED, AND DISEASE CONTROL MATERIALS**

- **Soap-Based Algicide/Demossers:** Used to control algae and moss build-up on irrigation systems. Subcommittee is seriously considering removal since there is no compelling evidence that it is in use.
  
  **Subcommittee Vote:** 5 voted to remove, 0 voted to relist, 1 absent
  
  **Final Vote:** Remove [ ] Relist [ ]

- **Chlorine Materials (Calcium Hypochlorite, Sodium Hypochlorite, Chlorine Dioxide):** Used to disinfect tools, prevent spread of diseases, and increase food safety of organic products. The subcommittee is generally in favor of relisting but some commenters opposed its re-listing due to the belief that organic production should be chlorine-free as much as possible.
  
  **Subcommittee Vote:** 1 voted to remove, 4 to relist
  
  **Final Vote:** Remove [ ] Relist [ ]

- **Boric Acid:** Used for structural pest control, but cannot come into contact with organic food or crops. The subcommittee is generally in favor of relisting, but it would like more information on the safety of other alternatives and whether any of the alternatives are as safe and effective.
  
  **Subcommittee Vote:** 1 voted to remove, 4 to relist
  
  **Final Vote:** Remove [ ] Relist [ ]
Lime Sulfur: Used for pest and disease control. The subcommittee is generally in favor of relisting but some commenters opposed its relisting and asked that its uses be looked at and an annotation added that would limit its use.

Subcommittee Vote: 1 voted to remove, 4 to relist
Final Vote: Remove ☐ Relist ☐

FERTILIZERS, SOIL AMENDMENTS, AND CROP PRODUCTION AIDS

Humic Acids: Used as a fertilizer and soil amendment. The subcommittee is discussing the need for an annotation change during the next five years to address the various versions of humates. The subcommittee is concerned that the alkali extracted humic acids, specifically, may not be compatible with organic agriculture.

Subcommittee Vote: Split vote for removal with 2 in favor of removal, 2 to relist and 1 abstain
Final Vote: Remove ☐ Relist ☐

Ethylene: Used to regulate pineapple flowering. Considering removal because it is primarily only needed by large growers.

Subcommittee Vote: 4 in favor of removing, 0 opposed, 1 absent
Final Vote: Remove ☐ Relist ☐

Sodium Silicate: Used as a floatation aid in post-harvest handling of organic products. The subcommittee is considering removal due to limited public comment.

Subcommittee Vote: 5 in favor of removal, 0 in favor of relisting
Final Vote: Remove ☐ Relist ☐

Microcrystalline Cheesewax: Used to prevent undesirable fungi growth in log-grown mushroom production. Considering removal due to alternatives, although the availability is not clear. Comments are needed.

Subcommittee Vote: 1 for removal, 2 for relisting, 2 abstain, 1 absent
Final Vote: Remove ☐ Relist ☐

Lignin Sulfonate: Used as a flotation agent. Comments indicate that it is not being used, consistent with the OTA petition requesting its removal. Subcommittee is in favor of its removal. The vote was inconclusive due to missing members.

Subcommittee Vote: 5 for removal, 0 for relisting, 1 absent
Final Vote: Remove ☐ Relist ☐
EPA List 4 – Inerts of Minimal Concern (applies to both Crops and Livestock): Allowed in organic pest, weed, and disease control products. NOSB indicated its intention to consider the prohibition on Nonylphenol Ethoxylates (NPEs), specifically, in organic pesticide products. This would be done via an annotation change in a separate proposal and action from sunset. The subcommittee is also working on a recommendation to move inert review to the EPA Safer Choice program.

Subcommittee Vote: 1 in favor of removal, 4 for relisting
Final Vote: Remove ☐ Relist ☐

LIVESTOCK SUBCOMMITTEE (LS)

205.603 – SYNTHETICS ALLOWED IN ORGANIC LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

Furosemide: Used as a disinfectant, sanitizer and medical treatment. NOP requires a withdrawal period of at least two times that required by FDA. The subcommittee is planning to remove unless it receives public or written comments from stakeholders addressing why alternatives could not be suitable

Subcommittee Vote: 5 voted to remove and 1 to relist
Final Vote: Remove ☐ Relist ☐

Parasiticides (Fenbendazole, Ivermectin, Moxidectin): Used to control internal parasites in organic breeder stock and dairy animals only

Subcommittee Vote: Remove Ivermectin and to relist Fenbendazole. NOSB debating the status of Moxidectin. More public comment is requested.

Ivermectin: 5 voted to remove, 1 voted to relist, 2 absent
Final Vote: Remove ☐ Relist ☐

Moxidectin (for control of internal parasites only): 4 voted to remove, 2 for relisting, 2 absent
Final Vote: Remove ☐ Relist ☐

Fenbendazole: 0 voted to remove, 6 voted to relist, 2 absent
Final Vote: Remove ☐ Relist ☐

Poloxalene: Fast-acting synthetic material approved for emergency treatment of bloat only. One commenter suggested that poloxalene is not essential because olive oil and other oils would substitute. The argument is that poloxalene is better because it is faster acting than oils in relief of bloat.

Subcommittee Vote: 1 in favor of removing, 5 in favor or renewing, 2 absent
Final Vote: Remove ☐ Relist ☐
Procaine: Used as a local anesthetic. The subcommittee is considering a revision to the annotation to modify the withholding period to five days after administering. Current use requires a withdrawal period of 90 days after administering to livestock intended for slaughter and seven days after administering to dairy animals. This would be a recommendation separate from sunset.

Subcommittee Vote: 1 in favor of removing, 5 in favor or renewing, 2 absent
Final Vote: Remove ☐  Relist ☐

Lidocaine: Used as a local anesthetic. Considering an annotation to modify the withholding period to five days after administering. Current use requires a withdrawal period of 90 days after administering to livestock intended for slaughter and seven days after administering to dairy animals. This would be a recommendation separate from sunset.

Subcommittee Vote: 0 in favor of removing, 6 in favor or renewing, 2 absent
Final Vote: Remove ☐  Relist ☐

Copper Sulfate: Used as hoof bath to treat foot conditions. The subcommittee is generally in favor of relisting but information about its necessity is important due to the petition for zinc sulfate.

Subcommittee Vote: 1 to remove, 5 to relist and 2 absent
Final Vote: Remove ☐  Relist ☐

Mineral Oil: Used for topical treatments and as a lubricant. Little comment was received. The subcommittee does not believe it is essential

Subcommittee Vote: 1 to remove, 3 to relist, 1 absent and 1 abstain. More comments are requested.
Final Vote: Remove ☐  Relist ☐

HANDLING/PROCESSING

205.605: ALLOWED NON-AGRICULTURAL INGREDIENTS/PROCESSING AIDS

Potassium phosphate: pH control in milk products. Used as a microbial nutrient (yeast food); source of mineral potassium and/or phosphorus. Allowed under NOP in “Made with” products only.

Subcommittee Concern: Public commenters mentioned new information relating to negative human health impacts. A member asked whether phosphates are listed on the ingredient panel or nutritional panel on products. Several members indicated that phosphates are listed as an ingredient, and of the products they researched, they found no potassium phosphate, only sodium phosphate. There was little comment in favor of potassium phosphate from industry. Since it is only allowed in “Made with Organic” products, there may not be much interest. Phosphates will be included as a topic for the HS research priorities.

Subcommittee Vote: 3 to remove, 2 to relist, 1 absent
Final Vote: Remove ☐  Relist ☐
Sodium phosphates (for use only in dairy foods): Used as an emulsifier in organic cheese products.

**Subcommittee Concern:** Similar to potassium phosphate: there is mixed information about health effects. Some literature indicates that phosphates have a negative effect on calcium uptake/absorption; however, this effect is related to the total amount of phosphates in the diet. There was a lack of consensus around the subject of health effects in previous NOSB reviews. A member also noted that when sodium phosphate is used as an emulsifier in cheese, it is listed on the label. The group questioned whether sodium phosphate was used exclusively as an ingredient or is also used as a processing aid.

**Subcommittee Vote:** 1 to relist, 4 to remove, 1 absent, 1 abstain

**Final Vote:** Remove ☐ Relist ☐

Magnesium Carbonate: Alkali used for sour cream, butter, ice cream, cacao products, and canned peas. Flow agent for salt. Allowed under NOP in “Made with” products only.

**Subcommittee Concern:** Comments were received that some processors are using this material. The subcommittee believes that it is “non-essential” but allowed in the “Made with” category only. Because it does not appear to be essential, the subcommittee plans to remove it.

**Subcommittee Vote:** 7 to remove, 0 to relist, 0 absent/abstain

**Final Vote:** Remove ☐ Relist ☐

**205.606: ALLOWED AGRICULTURAL INGREDIENTS WHEN COMMERCiALLY UNAVAILABLE IN ORGANIC FORM**

The subcommittee voted in favor of removing the following ingredients due to public comments indicating that organic supply is available or no comments were received indicating a need one way or another:

**COLORS:** The subcommittee noted that there are four colors not available in organic form: pumpkin juice, black currant, beet juice extract, and red cabbage extract. The remaining 13 colors are available commercially in organic form.

Motion to remove the following thirteen colors (**Subcommittee Vote:** 7 to remove, 0 to relist):

- Black/Purple carrot juice color
- Blueberry juice color
- Carrot juice color
- Cherry juice
- Chokeberry—Aronia juice color
- Elderberry juice color
- Grape juice color
- Grape skin extract color
- Paprika color
- Purple potato juice
- Red radish extract color
Saffron extract color

Turmeric extract color

Motion to relist the following colors (Subcommittee Vote: 0 to remove, 7 to relist):

- Beet juice extract color
- Black currant juice color
- Pumpkin juice color
- Red cabbage extract color

**Turkish bay leaves.** Used as flavoring. One commenter noted that they are sourcing this material and the supply is fragile. Market data indicate that the supply is robust. The HS supports removal based on availability of organic sources.

Subcommittee Vote: 7 to remove, 0 to relist

Final Vote: Remove ☐  Relist ☐

**Peppers (Chipotle chile).** Public commenters showed broad support for removing peppers from the list.

Subcommittee Vote: 7 to remove, 0 to relist

Final Vote: Remove ☐  Relist ☐

**Lemongrass-frozen.** Commenters indicated that there is sufficient organic supply available and no commenters opposed delisting.

Subcommittee Vote: 7 to remove, 0 to relist

Final Vote: Remove ☐  Relist ☐

**Galangal, frozen.** Widely used in Asian foods. Commenters indicated that there is sufficient organic supply available and no commenters opposed delisting.

Subcommittee Vote: 7 to remove, 0 to relist

Final Vote: Remove ☐  Relist ☐

**Dillweed oil.** Used for products such as dill pickles. Meets definition of a natural flavor and has an annotation to that effect.

Subcommittee Vote: 7 to remove, 0 to relist

Final Vote: Remove ☐  Relist ☐
**Chia.** Commenters indicated that there is sufficient organic supply available and no commenters opposed delisting.

**Subcommittee Vote:** 7 to remove, 0 to relist

**Final Vote:** Remove □  Relist □

**Orange Pulp, Dried.** Commenters indicated a lack of demand and existence of organic alternatives. No commenters indicated that it was necessary.

**Subcommittee Vote:** 7 to remove, 0 to relist

**Final Vote:** Remove □  Relist □

**Inulin-oligofructose enriched (IOE):** IOE is derived from inulin obtained primarily from chicory, and used as a fiber in dairy and baked goods. Commenters indicated that there is sufficient organic supply available and no commenters opposed delisting.

**Subcommittee Vote:** 7 to remove, 0 to relist

**Final Vote:** Remove □  Relist □

**Whey protein concentrate (WPC).** By-product of cheese manufacturing. NOSB received several comments from certifiers and the petitioner during the public comment period. According to public comments, there are organic sources available, and therefore the HS is in favor of removing it from the National List.

**Subcommittee Vote:** 6 remove, 0 relist, 1 absent

**Final Vote:** Remove □  Relist □

The subcommittee votes were split for the following:

**Celery Powder:** Used as natural antimicrobial/preservative in meat products. The subcommittee discussed the challenges of producing organic celery with the needed nitrate content for this use. More discussion and comments are needed.

**Subcommittee Vote:** 1 member voted for removal and the rest voted to relist

**Final Vote:** Remove □  Relist □

**Konjac Flour:** Derived from the elephant yam and used in traditional Asian foods as a binding agent and thickener. Public comments indicate overall support. Members discussed availability in the U.S. of organic Konjac and the lack of information regarding this. More comments are needed.

**Subcommittee Vote:** 4 voted to remove, 3 voted to relist, 0 absent/abstain

**Final Vote:** Remove □  Relist □
Fish Oil: Research indicates that some fish oil supplements contain contaminants and heavy metals, and harvesting of fish oil poses hazards to biodiversity and the environment. A member noted that many of these concerns are already addressed and are regulated in some countries. The TR indicated there are plant-derived alternatives, but rates of use are much higher than for fish oil, causing problems in product formulation. The group also discussed international standards for sustainable fish oil, and the possibility of some kind of restriction on sources. NOSB received no comment regarding contaminants.

Subcommittee Vote: 2 to remove, 4 to relist, 1 absent

Final Vote: Remove ☐ Relist ☐

Fructooligosaccharides (FOS): Non-digestible carbohydrate that is used as a soluble prebiotic fiber, sweetening agent, flavor enhancer, bulking agent and humectant. It is used in many foods including yogurts, infant foods, medical food, baked goods, candies, soups beverages and other dairy products. NOSB requested information from the public related to (1) ancillary substances, (2) commercial demand, (3) availability of organic sources, (4) alternatives and (5) function need. An organic ingredient broker and one manufacture of the substance asked for the continued listing and noted its usage in baked products.

Subcommittee Vote: 1 voted to remove, 4 voted to relist

Final Vote: Remove ☐ Relist ☐
Shaped largely by the first of the two public comment opportunities for 2017 Sunset Review, the NOSB subcommittees voted in favor of renewing the National List items below because they are either necessary for organic production (crops and livestock) or essential to organic handling/processing. They all appear to be in use by industry or there is no new and conclusive evidence that they are harmful to either the environment or human health.

### CROPS AND LIVESTOCK

#### ALLOWED INPUTS IN ORGANIC CROPS AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

Synthetic substances used in organic crop production run the spectrum of pest control products to livestock drugs to fertilizers to post-harvest handling aids. The pest control products are all also under the added scrutiny of the Environmental Protection Agency, which has determined them to be the least toxic class of pest and disease control products and has granted them a “tolerance exemption” found at 40 CFR Part 180. Livestock drugs all must be approved by FDA, and many must be administered under the care of a licensed veterinarian. Fertilizing materials have strict limitations on use patterns and manufacturing processes, which reduce potential harm to humans and the environment while keeping these critical tools available to organic farmers.

#### PROHIBITED INPUTS IN ORGANIC CROPS AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

Some non-synthetic substances are incompatible with organic production because they are harmful to humans and the environment and must be specifically prohibited. These substances make up two additional sections of the National List (205.602 and 205.604), which is subject to review by NOSB every five years like every other listing.

### 205.601 – SYNTHETICS ALLOWED IN ORGANIC CROP PRODUCTION

The lists below for both crops and livestock include the National List input and a description of its use. Unless noted otherwise, the subcommittee vote did not include any opposition to relisting.

#### ALGICIDES, SANITIZERS, AND PEST, WEED, AND DISEASE CONTROL MATERIALS

- **Alcohols (Ethanol and Isopropanol):** Used to disinfect tools, growing supplies, to prevent spread of diseases.
- **Hydrogen Peroxide:** Used to disinfect tools, prevent spread of diseases
- **Soap-Based Herbicides:** Used to control weeds, but restricted to roadways, ditches, and ornamental crops
- **Newspaper or other recycled paper:** Used as mulch for weed control or as a compost feedstock
- **Plastic mulch and covers:** Used for weed control, but cannot contain PVC materials and must be removed from the field at the end of the growing season
- **Ammonium Soaps:** Used as a large animal repellant, but cannot come into contact with soil or edible portion of crops
- **Elemental Sulfur:** Used for pest and disease control and as a fertilizer to correct sulfur deficiencies in soil
- **Horticultural Oils:** Used for pest and disease control
- **Insecticidal Soaps:** Used for pest and disease control
Sticky Traps/Barriers: Used to monitor for pest populations issues in organic fields
Sucrose octanoate esters: Used for pest control
Pheromones: Used to confuse pests and prevent infestations
Vitamin D3: Used for rodent control
Coppers, fixed: Used for disease control
Copper Sulfate: Used for pest and disease control and as a fertilizer to correct copper deficiencies in soil
Hydrated Lime: Used for disease control
Potassium Bicarbonate: Used for disease control

**Fertilizers, soil amendments, and crop production aids**

Aquatic Plant Extracts: Used as a fertilizer and soil amendment
Lignin Sulfonate: Used as a chelating agent and dust suppressant
Micronutrients: Used as a fertilizer when testing shows deficiencies
Liquid Fish Products: Used as a fertilizer and soil amendment
Vitamin B1, C, and E: Used as a fertilizer and soil amendment

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205.602—Non-Synthetics prohibited in organic crop production

Ash from manure burning
Arsenic
Lead Salts
Potassium Chloride
Sodium Fluoroaluminate
Strychnine
Tobacco Dust (Nicotine Sulfate)

205.603—Synthetics allowed in organic livestock production

Alcohols (Ethanol and Isopropanol): Used as a sanitizer and disinfectant
Aspirin: Used to reduce inflammation
Atropine: Used as an antidote for livestock poisoning
Biologics (Vaccines): Used to prevent disease
Butorphanol: Used as an anesthetic for surgical procedures
Chlorhexidine: Used as an antiseptic and teat dip when alternatives have lost efficacy
Chlorine Materials (Calcium Hypochlorite, Sodium Hypochlorite, Chlorine Dioxide): Used as sanitizer and disinfectant
Electrolytes: Used to replenish electrolytes in organic livestock
Flunixin: Used to treat inflammation and pyrexia
Glucose: Used to treat ketosis and hypoglycemia
Glycerin: Used in livestock teat dips
Hydrogen Peroxide: Used as a disinfectant
Iodine: Used as a topical disinfectant and as a teat dip
Magnesium Hydroxide: Used as an antacid and laxative
Magnesium Sulfate: Used to treat grass tetany
Oxytocin: Used in post parturition therapeutic applications (e.g., retained placenta)
Peroxyacetic/Peracetic Acid: Used as an equipment cleaner
Phosphoric Acid: Used as an equipment cleaner
Poloxalene: Used as an emergency bloat treatment
Tolazoline: Used to reverse the effects of Xylazine after surgical procedures
Xylazine: Used as a sedative, analgesic, and muscle relaxant
Copper Sulfate: Used as hoof bath to treat foot conditions
Formic Acid: Used to control Varroa mites in beehives
Hydrated Lime: Used as an external parasiticide
Sucrose Octonoate Esters: Used as an external parasiticide
Methionine: An essential amino acid used as a feed additive
Trace Minerals and Vitamins: Used as feed additives to satisfy livestock nutritional needs
Excipients: Used as additives to allowed livestock healthcare treatments

205.603—NON-SYNTHETICS PROHIBITED IN ORGANIC LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION
Strychnine

HANDLING/PROCESSING

205.605(A) – ALLOWED NON-SYNTHETIC NON-AGRICULTURAL

The organic regulations provide for use of minor ingredients, processing aids, sanitizers and disinfectants that are critical to organic processing but are not available in organic form because they are non-agricultural (the rule only certifies agricultural products). Most if not all of the ingredients on the handling section of the list are used at less than 2% of the organic product. Most of the USDA organic products on the grocery store shelves are 99%+ organic. It’s important to note that there are 79 non-agricultural minor ingredients allowed in organic processing compared to more than 3,000 substances allowed in conventional food. The list below represents the relatively few but critical minor ingredients certified handlers may use to make organic processed products.

The lists below include the National List input and a description of its use. Unless noted otherwise, the subcommittee vote did not include any opposition to relisting.
BIOLOGICS

Yeast (microorganisms): Used for flavoring, as a protein source (nutritional yeast), and various fermentation applications such as bread, wine and beer. Organic forms of yeast must be used when commercially available. Growth on petrochemical substrate and sulfite waste liquor is prohibited.

Dairy cultures (microorganisms): Used in making yogurt, cheese, some butter, and milk-derived products such as kefir.

Enzymes: Used in bakery products, for making cheese, juice, barley malt and many other food processing purposes. Must be derived from edible, non-toxic plants, non-pathogenic fungi, or non-pathogenic bacteria.

FOOD FILTERING AIDS

Diatomaceous earth: Used for filtering numerous organic products.

Bentonite: Used as a filtering aid, as a thickener and as a colorant in wine.

Perlite: Used as a filtering aid especially by the juice sector.

ACIDS

Citric acid: Must be produced via fermentation with a carbohydrate substrate. Citric acid is used to adjust the pH (acidity) of numerous organic products as well as maintaining the quality and control of microorganisms. Used as a flavoring for beverages, ice cream, and baked goods. Also prevents off-flavors in fried potatoes and is used as a foam inhibitor.

Lactic acid: Used as an acidulant in beverages, olives, dried egg whites, cottage cheese, bread, cheese products, soy-based cheese products, etc., and may be used in the brewing industry.

NATURAL FLAVORS

Flavors: Must be derived from non-synthetic sources only, and must not be produced using synthetic solvents and carrier systems or any artificial preservative. Used to improve the flavor of foods and beverages.

(Note: NOSB will also be voting on a petition to require organic flavors when they are commercially available)

GASES

Nitrogen: Keeps cans rigid in still juice. Excludes oxygen from sealed containers. Used in flash freezing of foods. The nitrogen dissipates into the air after freezing and does not remain in the food product.


WAXES

Carnauba wax: Candy glaze and polish.

Wood resin: Used as a coating for fresh citrus fruits.

GENERAL — INGREDIENTS/PROCESSING AIDS

Attapulgite: Used as a processing aid and functions as a natural bleaching clay for the purification of vegetable and animal oils.

Calcium carbonate: Used as a carrier for bleaches. Also used as an alkali to reduce acidity, a neutralizer and firming agent. Used in baking powder as a neutralizer.

Calcium chloride: Used as a firming agent for sliced apples and other fruits and in certain cheeses to aid coagulation of the milk (turns liquid into thick gel for cutting into curds).
Kaolin (Clay Mineral): Used as an anti-caking agent in food (e.g., keeps powders from caking or sticking).

Magnesium sulfate: Nutrient supplement. Used as mineral supplements for food, leavening agents and pH control agents. Also used as a corrective in the brewing industry.

Potassium chloride: A yeast food used in the brewing industry to improve brewing and fermentation and in the jelling industries. Used a substitute for sodium chloride in low-sodium dietary foods.

Potassium iodide: Used in table salt as a source of dietary iodine. It is also in some drinking water.

Sodium bicarbonate: Baking soda. Used in prepared pancake biscuit and muffin mixes; a leavening agent in baking powders; in various crackers and cookies; to adjust acidity in tomato soup, in pastes and beverages; in syrups for frozen products; in confections and self-rising flours. Used also as a neutralizer for butter, cream mild and ice cream.

Sodium carbonate: Used as a neutralizer for butter, cream, fluid milk and ice cream; in the processing of olives before canning; and in cocoa products.

205.605(B) – ALLOWED SYNTHETIC NON-AGRICULTURAL

SANITIZERS

Acidified sodium chlorite: Used as a secondary direct antimicrobial food treatment and for indirect food contact surface sanitizing. Under consideration by FDA as a sprouting seed disinfectant.

Chlorine materials (Calcium hypochlorite; Chlorine dioxide; and Sodium hypochlorite): For disinfecting and sanitizing food contact surfaces and as a sanitizer in the handling and processing of organic crops.

Hydrogen peroxide: Bleaching agent and disinfectant. Effective and environmentally benign substance used to reduce/control microorganisms for food safety purposes. Critical for sanitizing aseptic packaging.

Ozone: Disinfectant and fumigant. Effective and environmentally benign substance used to reduce/control microorganisms for food safety purposes.

Phosphoric acid: Cleaning of food-contact surfaces and equipment only. Used in dairy lines.

NUTRIENT VITAMINS AND MINERALS

Nutrient vitamins and minerals: Used to fortify organic food in accordance with FDA requirements.

Ferrous sulfate: Used for iron enrichment or fortification of organic baby food, flour, and animal feed.

GENERAL - INGREDIENTS/PROCESSING AIDS

Alginates: Seaweed derivatives used as stabilizers and water retainers in beverages, ice creams, salad dressings, and confections. Provides heat-stable gels.

Ammonium bicarbonate (for use only as a leavening agent): Leavening agent, pH control & dough strengthener. Used commonly in organic crackers. Is a nutrient in fermentation.

Ammonium carbonate (for use only as a leavening agent): Leavening agent, pH control agent. Baking powder component.

Ascorbic acid: Preservative and antioxidant in fruits, jellies, processed meat products, and dairy products. Also a common form of Vitamin C used in many organic products. Curing or pickling agent.

Calcium citrate: Buffer/pH control.
Calcium hydroxide: Used primarily for the manufacture of organic corn tortillas and organic sugar. Does not remain in final production (processing aid).

Calcium phosphates (monobasic, dibasic, and tribasic): Leavening, nutrient fortification for yeast growth, and monobasic as a firming agent. Also could be an anti-caking agent (tribasic), dough conditioner (mono- and dibasic), in jelling and canning various fruits and vegetables.


Ethylene: Used for postharvest ripening of tropical fruit and degreening of citrus.

Glycerides (mono and di): Used for drum drying of food such as organic potato flakes. Prevents the potatoes from sticking to the drum. Not present in final product (processing aid).

Glycerin: Commonly used in organic baked goods and organic body care products, as an emulsifier for natural flavors.

Magnesium chloride, derived from sea water: Coagulant in tofu manufacturing. Firming agent in canned vegetables.

Potassium acid tartrate: Used in many types of organic baked goods as a leavening agent. Used as part of aluminum-free baking powder, along with sodium bicarbonate and cornstarch.


Potassium citrate: Used as an acidulant, buffering agent and potassium source.

Sodium citrate: An emulsifier in ice cream, cheese, and evaporated milk; a buffer to control acidity and retain carbonation in beverages.

Sodium hydroxide (prohibited for use in lye peeling of fruits and vegetables): Caustic soda/Lye. An alkali and emulsifier. Use as a modifier for food starch, a glazing for pretzels.

Tocopherols: Used in numerous organic food and personal care products. One of the few antioxidants allowed in organic. Critical to the shelf life of organic products with essential oils; prevents rancidity.

Xanthan gum: Emulsifier & stabilizer thickener. Allows water and oils to remain mixed together in water-based foods such as dairy products and salad dressings. Also used commonly in organic frostings, cake mixes, cookies beverages, soups, frozen entrees and in juice and fruit spreads.

ALLOWED FOR USE IN MADE WITH PRODUCTS ONLY

Magnesium stearate: Used as an excipient and flow agent. Binding agent in tablets.

Sulfur dioxide: Allowed only in wine labeled “Made with Organic Grapes,” provided that total sulfite concentration does not exceed 100 ppm. Used to prevent spoilage of wine and to retain color.
205.606—NON-ORGANIC ONLY WHEN ORGANIC IS NOT AVAILABLE

The following ingredients are allowed in the 5% portion of an “organic” (95+) product only when the certified operator has demonstrated to its certifier that an organic form is not available in the necessary quality, quantity and form. This section of the list was created in recognition that organic supply of some agricultural ingredients is not adequately sufficient to consistently meet demand. In many cases, a certified operator will use the organic ingredient when it is available but at least has the option to use (and label) the non-organic form in the case there may be a supply issue. OTA views this as the entrepreneur’s list of opportunity!

**Casings, from processed intestines**

**Colors (Beet Juice Extract; Black Current; Pumpkin; Red Cabbage)**

**Gelatin**

**Gums—water extracted only (Arabic; Guar; Locust bean; and Carob bean)**

**Kelp**

**Lecithin—de-oiled**

**Orange shellac-unbleached**

**Pectin (non-amidated forms only)**

**Seaweed, Pacific Kombu**

**Starches: Sweet potato starch (for bean thread production only) & cornstarch (native)**

**Wakame seaweed (Undaria pinnatifida)**
WHO IS OTA?

WHO ARE OTA’S MEMBERS?

OTA members represent the huge diversity and the entire supply chain of today’s organic industry— small and large organic farmers of all types, local and national organic processors, regional and countrywide organic distributors, mom-and-pop organic stores and organic retail chains.

OTA members are proud to be a part of the association, and the OTA member list is—and always has been—open to the public. OTA represents over 8,500 businesses in 50 U.S. states. Half of OTA members are small businesses, reporting less than $1 million in organic sales per year.

OTA members include farmers, shippers, processors, certifiers, farmers associations, distributors, importers, exporters, consultants, retailers, and others. Organic products represented include organic foods, raw commodities, ingredients and beverages, as well as organic fibers, personal care products, pet foods, nutritional supplements, household cleaners and flowers.

OTA has two categories of membership—Trade and Associate. Trade members govern the association. Only North American-based businesses or organizations actually engaged in some aspect of the business of organic are eligible for Trade membership. Trade members receive OTA benefits, and each has one vote. Associate members include businesses, organizations and individuals not eligible for Trade membership but who are supportive of principles consistent with organic agriculture. Associate members can take advantage of OTA benefits but do not have voting privileges.

OTA’s Trade members are represented either through direct membership or through strategic partnerships with regional organic producer organizations across the U.S. OTA’s Farmers Advisory Council (FAC) encourages the formation of strategic alliances with farmer-driven organizations. OTA has a special membership category for small-scale organic farmers. The “Farmstead Membership” enables smaller organic farmers who have current membership with one of the participating organizations belonging to FAC to obtain a full OTA membership with all associated benefits for a minimal fee.

OTA’s Farmers Advisory Council (FAC) provides input from small- and medium-sized organic farmers, ranchers and growers to OTA on matters pertinent to the advancement of organic agriculture, with a specific focus on OTA’s policy agenda. Established in 2013, FAC is designed to formalize and improve communication between OTA and organic producers. It gives organic farmers a voice to directly influence OTA’s policy, and enables OTA to better represent the diversity of organic producers in its policy and advocacy.

The council is comprised of representatives of state and regional farming organizations representing organic that enter into an agreement with OTA for the mutual benefit of strengthening the organic industry’s national public policy influence.

MEMBERS OF OTA’S FARMERS ADVISORY COUNCIL:

CCOF Inc. (California Certified Organic Farmers)
Montana Organic Association
NOFA-Vermont
Oregon Tilth Certified Organic

Organic Egg Farmers of America
Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative
Tilth Producers of Washington
Western Organic Dairy Producers Alliance

If your organization is interested in being represented through FAC, contact OTA’s Senior Crops & Livestock Specialist Nate Lewis (nlewis@ota.com).
DO OTA MEMBERS PAY DUES?

Yes. Membership dues are calculated on a sliding scale based upon a company’s total organic sales. Farmers joining under the “Farmstead Membership” category whose annual income from organic sales is less than $250,000 pay a fee of just $50 per year. OTA’s membership categories and dues structure can be accessed online by any interested party—no special password or code necessary—and OTA’s financial records are transparent and public.

WHAT IS THE OTA CODE OF ETHICS?

Becoming an OTA member isn’t just signing up for a mailing list. All OTA Trade members must sign the Association’s Code of Ethics every year. The OTA Code of Ethics is a statement of the common values of the association. It serves as a guide to OTA members in the decisions they make as businesses and individuals to assist them with their responsibilities to the principles of organic agriculture and ethical business practices.

THE CODE OF ETHICS LAYS OUT SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES TO WHICH OTA MEMBERS STRIVE:

- Maintain the highest standards of business conduct and be legal and ethical in all business activity
- Promote and encourage the highest level of integrity within the organic industry
- Cooperate with other OTA members to advance organic agriculture and the organic industry
- Be fair and respectful to employers, employees, competitors, customers, the public
- Adhere to honesty in all representations to the public concerning organic
- Support a socially just and ecologically responsible production and supply chain
- Commit to the highest standards and practices for organic farming, processing and handling
- Observe all state or provincial, federal and international laws and regulations pertaining to organic production, processing and handling
- Represent OTA without rancor and support OTA and the industry by contributing to effective change.

WHAT IS THE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE OF OTA?

OTA’s structure reflects a commitment to utilizing members on its Board of Directors as strategic advisors and long-term thinkers, the staff as program planners and implementers, and the members as lenders of knowledge and expertise to the Board and staff.

OTA’s Board of Directors consists of 15 people, each of whom serves a term of three years. A Board member cannot serve more than three consecutive terms. OTA Board members are nominated and elected by OTA Trade members each year. The Board is made up of nine at-large members elected by the general membership, two Canada Organic Trade Association (COTA) representatives who have been elected by the general membership of COTA, and four members who are appointed by elected Board members. One of the seats is dedicated to a Farmer Board member.
HOW ARE POLICIES SET?

OTA offers numerous opportunities for members to not only get connected to conversations and issues that impact their businesses, but to actually help set policies. The voices of OTA members are listened to closely, and engagement with OTA members by OTA staff is constant and ongoing.

OTA Member Forums offer informal, ongoing conversation on issues of common interest, and help members network with peers, share their expertise, and discuss common challenges. OTA currently has nine Member Forums of diverse topics ranging from international trade to sustainability.

OTA Sector Councils offer a more formal avenue to build community among groups of members and to provide ongoing opportunities for networking, leadership development, and education. While Sector Councils do not act as policy-setting groups, they communicate sector issues, ideas, and concerns to OTA staff and Board. Sector Councils operate according to specific guidelines and prepare an annual report. OTA Task Forces are time-bound, task-oriented, and outcome-focused groups charged with accomplishing a definite objective. Task forces can be convened by the Board, staff or members in order to recommend a course of action or accomplish a specific goal.

Task forces provide transparent and inclusive opportunities for issue resolution and policy-setting. Task forces are open to the membership at-large.
WHO IS OTA?

WHAT IS OTA’S COMMENT PROCESS?

OTA submits comments on behalf of its membership. Our positions and policies are primarily shaped through our task forces. In all cases, OTA’s regulatory and legislative staff carry out an extensive process of membership engagement in order to understand how current issues and activities such as proposed rules or NOSB recommendations will impact certified farmers and handlers. Prior to submission of final comments, draft comments are distributed to membership at least a week in advance. Members are provided an opportunity to weigh in and shape any changes that may be needed prior to final submission. In order to carry out a meaningful comment process under OTA’s governance structure, a comment period needs to be at least 30 days.

GO-TO-SOURCE: OTA NOSB Report

Fully engaged in issues related to organic standards, OTA is the go-to-place for reporting on topics being considered, discussed and decided on by the National Organic Standards Board.

OTA does this through its NOSB Report, a members-only publication summarizing the twice-annual NOSB meetings and providing an overview of the agenda topics, public commentary, and key decisions made by the Board. The items included represent recommendations that NOSB developed and reviewed at its meetings. If accepted by the Board, recommendations pass to the National Organic Program, which determines the final form of the NOSB recommendations.

Check it out on OTA.com >News>The NOSB Report
Or follow OTA on twitter @OrganicTrade for real-time coverage of NOSB Meetings
As specified in the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA), two-thirds of the votes cast at an NOSB meeting at which a quorum is present shall be decisive of any motion [§2119(i)]. As there are 15 NOSB members, 10 votes in favor are needed to pass any recommendation. For the Fall 2015 meeting, there are only 14 members (one member resigned). 10 votes are still needed to pass any recommendation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcommittee</th>
<th>Agenda Item</th>
<th>Motion and Subcommittee Votes</th>
<th>Full Board Vote</th>
<th>Fails/Passes</th>
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<tr>
<td>CROPS</td>
<td>Micronutrients: Annotation Change</td>
<td><strong>Motion</strong>: To remove the words “by testing” from the current listing (5 yes, 0 No, 0 Absent)</td>
<td>Yes:</td>
<td>No:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CROPS</td>
<td>EPA List 4 Inerts: Annotation Change</td>
<td><strong>Motion</strong>: To accept the List 4 annotation change proposal (5 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent)</td>
<td>Yes:</td>
<td>No:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CROPS</td>
<td>Laminarin</td>
<td><strong>Classification Motion</strong>: As non-synthetic (5 Yes, 0 No, 0 Absent)</td>
<td>Yes:</td>
<td>No:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Listing Motion</strong>: Does not need to be added to the National List since it is non-synthetic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CROPS</td>
<td>Lignin Sulfonate: Petition to Remove from the National List</td>
<td><strong>Listing Motion</strong>: To remove from the 205.601(l)(1) as a floating agent in post-harvest handling (5 Yes, 0 No, 1 Absent)</td>
<td>Yes:</td>
<td>No:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CROPS</td>
<td>Sulfuric Acid: Petition to Add to the National List</td>
<td><strong>Classification Motion</strong>: As synthetic (5 Yes, 0 No, 0 Absent)</td>
<td>Yes:</td>
<td>No:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Listing Motion</strong>: To list sulfuric acid at 205.601 (0 Yes, 5 No, 0 Absent)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CROPS</td>
<td>Brown Seaweed Extract: Petition to Add to the National List</td>
<td><strong>Classification Motion</strong>: As synthetic (5 yes, 0 no, 0 Absent)</td>
<td>Yes:</td>
<td>No:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Listing Motion</strong>: To list seaweed extracts at 205.601 (0 yes, 5 no, 0 Absent)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>HANDLING</td>
<td>Alginic Acid: Reclassification from Non-Synthetic to Synthetic</td>
<td><strong>Motion</strong>: To reclassify Alginic Acid from 205.605(a) to 205.605(b) of the National List (6 yes, 0 No, 1 Absent)</td>
<td>Yes:</td>
<td>No:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subcommittee</td>
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<tr>
<td>HANDLING</td>
<td>Carnauba Wax: Reclassification from Non-Synthetic (Non-agricultural) to Agricultural</td>
<td><strong>Motion:</strong> To reclassify Carnauba Wax from 205.601(a) to 205.606 of the National List (6 yes, 0 No, 1 Absent)</td>
<td>Yes: No:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>HANDLING</td>
<td>Sodium &amp; Potassium Lactate: Petition to Add both to the National List</td>
<td><strong>Classification Motion:</strong> To classify both as synthetic (7 yes, 0 No, 0 Absent) <strong>Listing Motion:</strong> To list Sodium Lactate on 205.605(b) of the National List for use as an antimicrobial agent only (4 yes, 1 No, 2 Abstain)</td>
<td>Yes: No:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANDLING</td>
<td>Natural Flavors: Petition to: revise the annotation</td>
<td><strong>Motion:</strong> To revise flavors annotation to require organic flavors when they are commercially available (7 yes, 0 No, 0 Absent)</td>
<td>Yes: No:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANDLING</td>
<td>Ancillary Substances Permitted in Microorganisms</td>
<td><strong>Motion:</strong> To accept the functional classes of ancillary substances in the proposed chart (7 yes, 0 no, 0 Absent)</td>
<td>Yes: No:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANDLING</td>
<td>Ancillary Substances Permitted in Pectin</td>
<td><strong>Motion:</strong> To accept the functional classes of ancillary substances in the proposed chart (7 yes, 0 no, 0 Absent)</td>
<td>Yes: No:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANDLING</td>
<td>Ancillary Substances Permitted in Yeast</td>
<td><strong>Motion:</strong> To accept the functional classes of ancillary substances in the proposed chart (6 yes, 0 no, 2 Absent)</td>
<td>Yes: No:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HANDLING</td>
<td>2015 Research Priorities</td>
<td><strong>Motion:</strong> To adopt the proposal on NOSB Research Priorities for 2015 (6 yes, 0 no, 1 Absent)</td>
<td>Yes: No:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATERIALS</td>
<td>Prevention Strategy Guidance for Excluded Methods</td>
<td><strong>Motion:</strong> To accept the Prevention Strategy Guidance for Excluded Methods in Crops, Livestock &amp; Handling (6 yes, 0 no, 2 Absent):</td>
<td>Yes: No:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(National List References: 205.601 = allowed crop production inputs / 205.605(a)=allowed non-synthetics / 205.605(b) = allowed synthetics / 205.606=allowed non-OG agricultural ingredient when OG is not available)*
Organic Trade Association knows the foundation of organic: FARMERS

Organic farmers’ voices are heard through OTA Farmers Advisory Council

Organic farmers access resources & expertise with affordable OTA Farmstead memberships

Organic farmers priorities are represented in U.S. agricultural policy thanks to OTA leadership and advocacy on Capitol Hill

You can directly access OTA resources and expertise with an affordable $50 Farmstead Membership. OTA’s new membership category is for small-scale organic farmers with annual organic sales less than $250,000 who are also current members of one of the participating organizations in OTA’s Farmers Advisory Council. Contact Nathaniel Lewis, OTA Senior Crops and Livestock Specialist, at 360.388.6422 with questions.
GO SHOPPING!

**Stowe Wine & Cheese** (<0.1 miles)
1799 Mountain Rd., Stowe
*Fine wines, local and imported cheeses, VT maple products*

**Vermont Harvest Specialty Food** (<0.1 miles)
1799 Mountain Rd., Stowe
*Gourmet jams, jellies, conserves, and chutneys*

**Harvest Market** (0.7 miles)
1031 Mountain Rd., Stowe
*Gourmet take-out, bakery, wine, beer, local products*

**Commodities Natural Market** (1.2 miles)
512 Mountain Rd., Stowe
*Organic produce, local products, and many vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free options*

**Stowe Mercantile** (1.8 miles)
37 Main St., Stowe
*Penny candy, fresh handmade fudge, Vermont maple syrup, and Vermont craft beer and cider*

LOOKING FOR LUNCH?

**Charlie B’s** (<0.1 miles)
1746 Mountain Rd., Stowe
*Grill with ski-lodge décor, full bar*

**The Blue Donkey** (<0.1 miles)
1652 Mountain Rd., Stowe
Open Mon, Weds, Thurs, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
*Serves breakfast food, burgers and fries, and offers outdoor seating*

**Phoenix Table and Bar** (<0.1 miles)
1652 Mountain Rd., Stowe
Open Daily for Dinner, 5 – 10 p.m.
*Brunch/Lunch Sat & Sun, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Fresh oysters and clams, outdoor seating*

**Crop Bistro & Brewery** (0.1 miles)
1859 Mountain Rd., Stowe
*In-house brewery with pub food and sandwiches*

**Piecasso Pizzeria & Lounge** (0.2 miles)
1899 Mountain Rd., Stowe
*New York-style pizza in a fun atmosphere*

**Bender’s Burritos** (0.3 miles)
1880 Mountain Rd., Stowe
*Fresh tacos, quesadillas and non-traditional burritos, vegetarian and vegan options*

**Café on Main** (1.8 miles)
38 Main St., Stowe (In the Depot Building)
*Small breakfast and lunch café serving baked goods, soups, salads, and sandwiches*

**Trapp Family Lodge** (2.3 miles)
700 Trapp Hill Rd., Stowe.
*Farm-to-table dining and on-site brewery*

**Ben & Jerrys Factory** (10.3 miles)
1281 Waterbury-Stowe Rd., Waterbury, VT 05676.
*Grab an ice cream cone from the scoop shop and take a tour from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.*

HOW ABOUT A WALK ON THE GREEN SIDE?

**Stowe Recreation Path**
(Adjacent to Stoweflake’s property)
*5-mile paved bike path for running, walking or biking along the West Branch River. Great views of woods, river, and Mt. Mansfield*

**Canoeing/Kayaking at Umiak Outdoor Outfitters**
(2.6 miles)
849 South Main St., Stowe
*Enjoy foliage views while paddling around Waterbury Reservoir, 2-hour rentals*

**Bingham Falls** (4.7 miles)
Located off east side of Upper Mountain Road
*Lovely waterfall in the woods, part of Mt. Mansfield State Forest*

MAIL, SHIP OR PRINT?

**Stoweflake In-House Business Center**
*Features computers, photocopier, and fax machine/scanner*

**UPS Store** (1.9 miles)
112 South Main St., Stowe
*Offers printing, shipping, and office supplies*

The “Stoweflake” WiFi network is **FREE** and there is **NO PASSWORD** to log on.
CELEBRATE ORGANIC

at this networking event featuring the tradition and bounty of Vermont organic products.

Come and dance, celebrate, eat organic food and roast organic marshmallows!

Hosted by NOFA–VT and VOF

Sponsored by: Organic Trade Association • Consumer Reports • CROPP Stonyfield • Clif Bar • Driscoll’s • Pete & Gerry’s • United Natural Foods Inc. Vermont Soap • High Mowing Organic Seeds • Smuckers Natural Foods Thorvin Inc. • Wolf, DiMatteo + Associates • Buck Mountain Maple

WHERE:
Stoweflake Conference Center
Stowe, VT

WHEN:
Tuesday, October 27
6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

CONTACT OTA

LAURA BATCHA
CEO / Executive Director
(202) 403–8512 • lbatcha@ota.com

NATHANIEL LEWIS
Senior Crops and Livestock Specialist
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GWENDOLYN WYARD
Senior Director of Regulatory and Technical Affairs
(503) 798–3294 • gwyard@ota.com

MAGGIE MCNEIL
Director of Media Relations
(202) 403–8514 • mmcneil@ota.com

Organic Trade Association
SINCE 1985

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MEMBER SERVICES
28 Vernon Street, Suite 413, Brattleboro, VT
www.ota.com • E-mail: info@ota.com • (802) 275–3800 • Fax: (802) 275–3801

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